

# FRANCE AND BRITAIN

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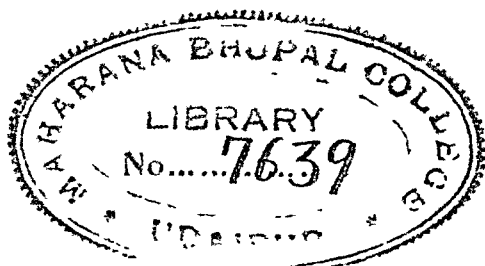
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# FRANCE AND BRITAIN

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a Chatham House Study Group*



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## FOREWORD

The Council of the Royal Institute of International Affairs some time ago invited a group of experts, representing a variety of opinions and pursuits, to discuss the problems raised by Anglo-French relations after the war. This Report is a summary of the conclusions which emerged from their discussions, which extended over a period of about two years, and were conducted in face of the difficulties presented by a rapidly changing situation.

The Study Group's terms of reference were broad and assumed nothing but the declared objectives of United Nations' policy. At times, the Group may have transcended even this limitation, as, for example, in its consideration of the alternatives to Anglo-French co-operation and of the consequences which might be expected to result from them. It has been felt, however, that Anglo-French relations have in the past suffered, and may again suffer, from an imperfect understanding both here and in France of the strategic and political conditions from which the Entente arose; and that full understanding is the necessary basis of the new and still more intimate association between the two peoples which is now beginning to emerge.

This preliminary inquiry having been completed, the Group went on to consider, in the general context of United Nations' policy, the special function of the Anglo-French Entente and the means by which that understanding could most effectively be sustained. Considerations of space have precluded any but the most general treatment of these subjects, but an attempt has been made to indicate the essentials of the problem and to sketch the broad outlines of a policy towards France. No purpose can be served here in summarizing the Group's conclusions, which are set forth fully in a final chapter. They represent the views of the Study Group, which collectively accepts responsibility for them, although each member does not

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## *Chapter I*

### INTRODUCTORY

While British post-war policy is already committed by obligations contracted and pronouncements made since June 16th, 1940, French policy is not quite so clearly laid down. The French Provisional Government has indeed taken over the obligations and commitments of the French Committee of National Liberation and those contracted by the French National Committee which preceded it, and evidently assumes all obligations contracted by France before June 1940. Thus the French Provisional Government and any conceivable successor it may have will no doubt consider itself bound by the Franco-British "Solemn Declaration" of March 28th, 1940<sup>1</sup> as well as by French adherence to the United Nations Declaration and therefore to the Atlantic Charter. But since June 1940, owing to the situation in which she was placed, France has until quite recently participated as an equal to such a limited extent in the major decisions of Allied policy that she is not in every respect as fully committed as Britain. This Report however is concerned primarily with British policy, and it must begin with an account of the general commitments which this country has already assumed and within the limits of which that policy must be formulated.

Our immediate obligations to France are clear. They were indicated by Mr Churchill in the House of Commons on September 28th, 1944, when he said: "I have repeatedly stated that it is the aim, policy, and interest of His Majesty's Government, of this country of Great Britain, and of the Commonwealth and Empire, to see erected once more, at the earliest moment, a strong, independent, and friendly France," and by Mr Eden, who, speaking in the same Debate, declared that

<sup>1</sup>The two Governments agreed not to discuss peace terms except by mutual agreement, and to maintain after the war community of action in all spheres for as long as necessary to safeguard their security and reconstruct with other nations an international order.



His Majesty's Government wished to see France "an equal and a potent partner in all our affairs."

The more general principles of British policy are set forth in the Atlantic Charter. It would be hard to argue that there is anything in that document which might fairly be called a legal commitment. It is solely an expression of principles and desires. Nevertheless, it has acquired a unique moral authority which has made it the accepted basis for the discussion of post-war problems, here and in America. No British Government is likely to feel free to depart from it in any essential respect.

The Charter, which originated in a joint declaration of principle by Mr Churchill and President Roosevelt, was later accepted by the rest of the United Nations. It consists of eight Articles. Article I is a repudiation by the signatories of all territorial ambitions. Article II expresses their desire to see no territorial changes which do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned. Article III asserts the intention of the signatories to respect the rights of all peoples to choose their own forms of government. Article IV states that the signatories will endeavour, though with due respect to their existing obligations, to assure to all nations, victor or vanquished, access on equal terms to raw materials. Article V expresses their desire for full collaboration between all nations in the economic field, with the object of improving labour standards and assuring social security throughout the world. Article VI embodies the hope that the peace may establish two of the four freedoms, freedom from fear and freedom from want, and Article VII concerns the freedom of the seas. Article VIII embodies three distinct ideas. It expresses, in the first place, the view that "for spiritual as well as for realistic reasons" nations must come to the abandonment of force. It goes on to specify the means by which this end may be approached. It declares that pending the establishment of a wider system of security those Powers which threaten aggression must be disarmed. It also states that the signatories will apply all practical measures to reduce the burden of arms for peace-loving peoples.

One of the most important characteristics of the Atlantic

Charter is its emphasis on the close relationship between political and economic factors. It does not conceive the possibility of an international system which will, at one and the same time, secure peace and fail to secure freedom from fear and want for "all the men in all the lands." It is thus concerned not only with the abolition of war but with the need for social and economic reform on an international scale. The ideal to which it points is a world-wide organization for the maintenance of peace and the direction of the economic activities of all nations to the end of common prosperity.

The Charter does not in any way suggest that these aims will be easily or quickly achieved. It refers explicitly to an interim period pending the establishment of a general system of security. For that period it lays down the principle of discrimination against ex-enemy Powers. The absolute disarmament of such Powers, accompanied by measures to lessen the burden of armament for peace-loving peoples (a phrase which implies that the "peace-loving peoples" will retain their military forces) is perhaps the only concrete recommendation which the document contains. It is not stated how long this period is to last, but it is clear from official statements subsequent to the Charter that the Allied Governments do not think of the restoration of enemy countries to equality with the Allies as anything but a very long-term project.

The Allies are thus pledged to work for a general system of security, and the outlines of such a system have already been sketched at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference. These proposals are still tentative and cannot come into force until they have been approved by the United Nations as a whole, but the Governments of Britain, Russia, and America have already expressed satisfaction with the results of the Conference and there can be little doubt that whatever is finally agreed will bear a close resemblance to the Dumbarton Oaks plan. It is proposed that under the new system the duty of taking and enforcing decisions should fall chiefly to a Security Council on which Britain, Russia, America, China, and—"in due course"—France, will be permanently represented and which will other-

wise consist of six members, chosen at two-yearly intervals, by all the member States. This Council will be assisted by a General Assembly in which all the Powers will be represented, but which will have strictly limited functions and a good deal less influence than that formerly exerted by the League Assembly. One very material point remains to be cleared up: it is not yet decided whether the rule of unanimity will hold good in the Council or whether a majority vote will be enough to authorize action. If the first alternative is accepted (and this seems likely) no action could be taken against one of the Great Powers, and the organization would confine itself to dealing with the minor threats to peace.

In three important particulars this system differs from the League. In the first place, it is based on a much franker recognition of the importance of power. Not only does it accord a much clearer ascendancy to the Great Powers but it provides for the exercise of their strength in the only way which can stop aggression. Nowhere is it suggested that economic sanctions or expressions of moral disapprobation will suffice to keep the peace. Specific provision is, on the contrary, made for military action and it is clearly intended that this action should be as rapid and overwhelming as possible. Secondly, the purposes of the proposed organization are much wider than those of the League. The Dumbarton Oaks Conference deliberately avoided any attempt to define aggression and leaves the Council free to judge by its own standards what constitutes a threat to peace. Finally, there is no suggestion that the new organization will be incompatible with particular arrangements between member States so long as such arrangements are consistent with its objects. The League also left room for such groupings, but the concession was so vague as to make it possible for many informed supporters of the Covenant to maintain that they were inconsistent with its provisions. It is clearly recognized, on the other hand, that the system proposed at Dumbarton Oaks cannot be effective unless it is supported by regional agreements. It is provided, for example, that the Council may delegate the responsibility for taking action in any particular case

to a member State whose geographical position specially fits it for the task.

From the point of view of this Report, two facts about the Dumbarton Oaks scheme are particularly important. First, France is, in course of time, to have a place in the new organization equal to that of the other Great Powers, and this means that one of her most insistent claims is already satisfied. Secondly, Britain need not feel inhibited by her wider commitments from cultivating specially close relations with her neighbours in western Europe. This leaves us free to explore with France the prospect of achieving such relations, and we may do so in the knowledge that we are serving the common interest of the United Nations as well as fulfilling one of the most urgent requirements of our own security.

Other problems arising out of the Charter, and particularly those presented by conflicting interpretations of the document, will have to be solved by allied statesmanship after the war. The whole question of the application of the Charter to Germany is still very confused. Mr Churchill, in the House of Commons on February 22nd, 1944, said emphatically that it could not apply to her "as a matter of right." This statement led to much criticism and one member asked to whom the Charter could apply if not to Germany. It seemed from the Prime Minister's later remarks that he was chiefly concerned to emphasize that the Charter was not in any sense the equivalent of President Wilson's Fourteen Points, and to ensure that no German Government to which we gave peace should be able to argue that we were bound by the terms of the Charter to any particular settlement or that surrender had only been made on the understanding that those terms would be observed. The question seems to be less whether the provisions of the Charter will hold good in any particular case than how these provisions can be reconciled with each other. In this connection Mr Attlee made it clear in the House of Commons on July 15th, 1943, that Article II would not prevent the Allies from establishing permanent bases on the territory of ex-enemy States if such bases were thought necessary on grounds of security. Similarly there is a potential

conflict between Articles IV, V, and VI on the one hand, and Article VIII on the other. The difficulty of effectively disarming aggressor States while increasing their economic prosperity is particularly apparent in the problems presented by German heavy industry. Such possible discrepancies between one part of the Charter and another do not at all detract from its usefulness or reduce its moral authority. They simply show the need for a definite system of priority. In this connection one principle can be regarded as a safe guide to policy, namely, that the need for ensuring security on which in the last resort everything depends must take precedence over other considerations.

In addition to commitments arising from the Charter, Great Britain has acquired other more specific obligations. The Dumbarton Oaks proposals start from the assumption that the Great Powers will maintain the co-operation they have achieved during the war, and that without this co-operation no peace system can be effective. Even before those proposals were published, Mr Churchill had expressed the view that "upon the fraternal association and intimate alignment of policy of the United States and the British Commonwealth and Empire depends more than on any other factor the immediate future of the world," and it has for long been a settled principle of British policy that close consultation should be maintained with the United States and that whenever possible the two countries should act together and in harmony. This *entente* derives its vitality from the fact that it is regarded by both peoples as having a specific and necessary function in the general system of security. It will be strengthened if it is made clear to United States opinion that Britain is determined to shoulder a full weight of responsibility in those regions where she commands influence. The American connection, far from justifying indifference towards Europe, is in itself a strong case for the acceptance by Britain of the role of leadership in European affairs which she is increasingly called upon to assume. Arrangements between particular Powers are often more enduring when they are directed to larger objects than the security of those Powers. This point is well illustrated by a quotation from *The*

*Times* of September 7th, 1943, where it is stated that "it is a matter of experience that the nations of the Commonwealth never felt their identity of purpose more strongly than when, in the exercise of their newly-defined sovereignty, they operated together within the framework of the League of Nations." There is every reason to believe that this rule will hold good in the case of Anglo-American relations.

Most outstanding of all the obligations which Britain has undertaken since 1940 is the Anglo-Soviet Alliance. Its terms pledge Britain and Russia to support each other in resisting any act of aggression committed against either of them by Germany and her allies during a period of twenty years. This Alliance is the basis of British policy in Europe and represents a striking departure from traditional British reluctance to undertake commitments in eastern Europe. It is evidence of Britain's resolve that Germany shall never again be allowed to establish her ascendancy over this strategically and economically important region, and it will help to remove the tension which previously existed between the British idea of limited Continental commitments and the traditional foreign policy of France.

Such, in broad outline, is the system of international organization to which Great Britain is committed. It is against this background that the question of Anglo-French relations has to be considered.

## *Chapter II*

### *BASIS OF ANGLO-FRENCH CO-OPERATION*

The Anglo-French Entente, formed at the beginning of the present century, was the basis of British policy in Europe until the military defeat of France in 1940. Before attempting to assess the prospects of its future consolidation it may therefore be useful to consider its origins and the nature of the interests which kept it in being for so long.

#### *BEFORE 1914*

At the beginning of the century there seemed little reason for supposing any necessary identity of interest between the two countries. They were traditional enemies; the British Empire had been largely acquired in conflict with France; the greatest war in modern English history had been fought against France; apart from a period of collaboration under the July Monarchy and again during the Crimean War, the relations of the two countries had been uncertain and often hostile for the greater part of the nineteenth century. In 1870 Britain had done nothing to prevent the defeat of France by Prussia. British opinion, not yet alive to the dangers implicit in the growth of Prussian power, did not conceive British interests to be involved in the conflict, though much sympathy was felt with the French especially at the loss of Alsace and Lorraine. In the last quarter of the century British and French commercial and imperial interests conflicted at many points, especially in Morocco, Egypt, and the Far East. In these circumstances it was hardly surprising that many rather than France as a possible ally. Attempts to achieve agreement with Germany on the question of relative naval power failed, however, and anxiety in this country at the increase of German naval armament and the tendencies of German foreign policy prepared the way for an approach to the French. Had Britain been able to convince herself that German

ambitions were confined to the Continent of Europe and that Germany would not attempt seriously to compete with British naval strength, it is possible that the Anglo-French Entente might never have been established.

At this period French policy in Europe was based principally upon the Dual Alliance with Russia, made in 1893. This Alliance had enabled France to emerge from the isolation which Bismarck had imposed on her. It was now reinforced by a close understanding with Britain, built up in 1904 by a series of agreements known as the "Entente Cordiale," by the most important of which France recognized Britain's position in Egypt in return for British recognition of France's claims in Morocco. Though a formal alliance was not established, the understanding became increasingly intimate as time went on. Thus it was the opinion of the British Foreign Secretary in 1914, though not of all his colleagues, that arrangements made between the two countries about the disposition of their respective navies in the event of war with Germany made it morally, if not legally, incumbent upon us to go to the assistance of France, if that contingency arose.

The strategic advantages of the Entente to both Powers were clear enough. To Britain it gave security against the establishment of a hostile army a few miles from her shores, a base from which to protect her interests in the Low Countries and to make good her guarantee to Belgium, if the need arose. It also gave to her the support of a great military Power. It assured her of access to the Mediterranean whose western approaches were dominated by France and the French North African Empire. To France, the Entente meant the support of the greatest naval Power in the world and the probability, which soon developed into the certainty, of British military support in the first phases of a war.

### 1919 TO 1940

These strategic considerations continued to provide a basis for Anglo-French co-operation in the inter-war period. Relations, however, were not uniformly smooth. France emerged from the last war the strongest Power in Europe, but at the



same time acutely conscious of the difficulty of maintaining that position for long. The losses which she had suffered and the vast disparity between the population and economic resources of Germany and her own resources made it essential, in the absence of a system of general security backed by military force, that she should protect herself by a system of alliances aimed at preventing a revival of aggressive military power in Germany. To build up such a system, and having built it up to maintain it, were the constant objects of French policy during most of the period. The revival of the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1887 was made impossible by the fact that Russian foreign policy was then in its militant revolutionary phase and by the fact that Russia, having herself suffered from the Peace Settlement, was not specially fitted to act as a bulwark of the *status quo*. Far from appearing as a possible friend the U.S.S.R. seemed to France, as she did to Britain, a menace to European peace scarcely less formidable and far more immediate than Germany herself. The possibility of a rapprochement between Germany and the Soviet Union was, indeed, a constant anxiety to the western Powers, and these fears were justified when Germany made the Pact of Rapallo with Russia in 1922.

In 1919 two alternatives seemed open to France. She might either seek security by attempting to obtain a clear military guarantee of her frontiers from Britain and America, an arrangement which would have enabled her to adopt a more detached attitude to central and eastern Europe, or she might revert to the policy of a continental alliance in which neither Britain nor America would participate and which could only be based upon the small Powers built out of the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires. She accepted the proposal that, in return for the renunciation of her claim for military security on the Rhine, Britain and America should jointly guarantee her eastern frontier. The project broke down, however, as a result of America's refusal to perform her share of the bargain. Britain subsequently offered to give an independent guarantee but the terms proposed did not include an exact definition of the kind of aid to be afforded and the French preferred no treaty to one

which they considered inadequate. France was, therefore, driven back upon the second policy which took the form of a military alliance with Poland and with the States of the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Roumania, and Yugoslavia).

This system of alliances was at once directed towards preventing a revival of German military power and, though less explicitly, towards the stemming of Russian and Bolshevik expansion westwards. It seemed doubtful from the first whether, in view of the instability and weakness of the Powers concerned, it could perform this double function, and it was evident that circumstances might arise in which France's eastern allies might be a liability. After the advent of Hitler it soon became apparent that they did not provide an adequate counterpoise to German power in central Europe. Russia, however, had now emerged from isolation, and, responding to the threat to her own security produced by Germany's plans for expansion eastwards, agreed to a pact of mutual assistance with France. Accordingly the Franco-Soviet Pact was signed in 1935. One of the contributory causes of this Treaty was the scepticism of France's small allies about her ability to give them effective assistance in the event of a German attack, and the consequent withdrawal of some of them from the French security system. Thus French policy had become again what it was in 1914, namely, an attempt to cancel off the power of Germany by military alliance with Russia plus a close *entente* with Britain. But the Franco-Soviet Pact never became effective. After the Munich crisis in 1938 signs of the withdrawal of Russia into isolation already began to appear, and the breakdown of the Anglo-Franco-Russian negotiations for an alliance directed against German aggression in 1939 left France with only one continental ally, namely, Poland. This alliance was underwritten by Britain in April 1939.

This brief review of French foreign policy between 1919 and 1939 enables us to consider some of the points at which British and French policy diverged during that period and to estimate the extent to which the same differences may be expected to arise in the future. The most serious of them were obviously

those concerned with the treatment to be accorded to Germany and they arose most critically in the crisis in Anglo-French relations which resulted from the occupation of the Ruhr. A more fundamental difference, however, resulted from the fact that Britain was never willing to share the continental commitments of France. The idea of a Europe dominated by an alliance under French leadership and directed explicitly against Germany seemed completely out of harmony with the traditions of British policy. This difference was revealed in many ways but especially in the different attitudes adopted respectively by Britain and France towards the League of Nations. Up to 1935, the British view of the League emphasized its potentialities as an instrument of conciliation rather than its function as an organization for the forcible maintenance of law. Its task was conceived to be the adjustment of disputes by peaceful means rather than the defence of an existing order against law-breakers. Thus, repeated French proposals designed to give the League the backing of effective military force excited strong suspicion in this country and invited the criticism that France wished to use the League exclusively as an instrument of French policy.

When the authority of the League was challenged by the Italian invasion of Abyssinia in 1935, Britain took the lead in advocating the imposition of sanctions. This fact seemed paradoxical to many Frenchmen who regarded it as a complete reversal of British policy explicable only by reference to sinister, though incomprehensible, motives. The truth of the matter was that the appearance of new dangers to peace had made British opinion more conscious of the need for concerted resistance to aggression. The failure of attempts to achieve general disarmament, the success of Japanese aggression in Manchuria in 1931, and the establishment of the Nazi régime in Germany, all took their part in forming the opinion that expressed itself in the Peace Ballot. It was felt that every unpunished act of aggression would serve only to encourage further aggression, and that if the process were not stopped early it could only lead to another world war. Besides, many of the causes which had induced Britain to acquiesce in Japanese aggression in 1931 did not

operate in relation to the Abyssinian affair. British willingness to compromise had declined with economic recovery. Our domestic social structure was not threatened as it was in 1931 and this made a more vigorous policy possible. Nevertheless, it is probably fair to say that few of those Englishmen who urged strong action against Italy took full account of the danger that such action would give Germany her long-desired chance to re-militarize the Rhineland. This consideration was very much present to French minds. To some Frenchmen, Britain's zeal in the repression of Italian aggression seemed to contrast too obviously with her apparent unconcern at the prospect of German aggression. After the Stresa Conference in 1934, it seemed probable that Italy could be counted as among the Powers hostile to German expansion, since, in the case of Austria, such expansion would directly threaten her. Support of Abyssinia might thus have the double effect of diverting Britain and France from the German peril and of alienating a Power whose support against Germany seemed probable. This opinion was by no means unanimously shared by all Frenchmen, and many took the British view that a stand against Italy would be a deterrent rather than an inducement to German aggression. Nevertheless, the Abyssinian question is a good instance of the conflict between the wide view of security held in Britain and the narrow view, fixed exclusively on the Continent of Europe and particularly on Germany, which was characteristic of France. This difference made co-operation over the Abyssinian question ultimately impossible. Had M. Blum's Popular Front Government been in office in France or had not the British Government been just returned to power on the basis of a pledge to support the League, French and British policy might have been easier to reconcile. As it was, the differences were aggravated by a lack of harmony between the political outlook prevailing in London and the current temper of French politics. This is again a good instance of what has been a permanent source of difficulty in Anglo-French relations. The tide of popular feeling in the two countries, though subject to the same oscillations, seldom moves simultaneously in the same direc-

tion. France tends to be "progressive" when Britain is "reactionary," and *vice versa*. Constancy can only be achieved when the necessity of co-operation is taken outside the sphere of party controversy and is common ground between all parties. The result of Franco-British disagreement in 1935 was that the Italian venture succeeded in Abyssinia, while Germany, encouraged at once by the new entanglements in which Britain and France were involved and by the evident weakness of the western Powers in face of those entanglements, successfully reoccupied the Rhineland.<sup>1</sup>

One more factor which impeded full co-operation between Britain and France at the time of the Abyssinian crisis deserves mention. A few months before the Italian attack on Abyssinia, an Agreement for the limiting of naval strength between Britain and Germany had been made without reference to France. The Agreement fully safeguarded Britain's naval supremacy and, in so far as it was observed by Germany, was an effective obstacle to any serious attempt at competition. Nevertheless, the fact that it was made without prior consultation with France caused alarm and indignation in Paris, and it seems probable that the reluctance of France to follow the British lead over Abyssinia was increased by the suspicions which this Agreement aroused.

The friction arising out of the disagreement between Britain and France over the Abyssinian question was removed by the adoption of a common policy towards Italy reflected first in the abandonment of sanctions and then in the Anglo-Italian and Franco-Italian Agreements of 1938. From 1938 to the spring of 1939 the European policies of Britain and France were again almost identical. They aimed at postponing war at the cost of a series of concessions to the Axis countries. When it was clear that Germany's demands were insatiable Britain suddenly discarded her old policy of avoiding commitments in central and

<sup>1</sup> Whether or not France, had she been assured of British assistance, would have resisted the German occupation is a question which cannot be answered here. It is the French contention that Britain refused to support a policy of resistance. From time to time, however, it has been maintained from the British side that British support would have been forthcoming had France evinced any intention of opposing the German move.

eastern Europe and gave guarantees, in quick succession, to Poland, Roumania, and Greece. The fact remained, however, that no adequate counterpoise to German power in the east of the Continent had been established and these guarantees, which were in the first instance unilateral and could not become effectively reciprocal, were an argument for rather than against securing an alliance with Russia. To obtain such an alliance accordingly became the chief object of British policy in the months immediately preceding the outbreak of war. Englishmen realized that Russia was the only country in eastern Europe capable of withstanding the Reich, a thesis which had for long been widely held in France. This policy, accompanied by a rapid intensification of rearmament and by the introduction of conscription, brought the British position roughly into line with the traditional attitude of France. Henceforth Britain would accept fully the responsibilities of a European Power. Her interest in central and eastern European affairs was no longer, as it had been, indirect and derived simply from the fact that France had commitments in this area and that we could not be indifferent to a war in which she was involved. This turning point in British policy is of the utmost importance to the future of Anglo-French relations.

### CONCLUSIONS

It has been assumed in this Report that British policy will aim at the eventual setting-up of some general system of security. The acceptance by Britain at Dumbarton Oaks of the view that no system of security which does not command the sanction of military force will be effective, removes one of the principal obstacles which stood in the way of complete Anglo-French understanding in the inter-war period. The extent to which the attitude of Britain towards Germany is likely to be different from that of France is a matter for later discussion (see Chapter V, Section I). There is another issue, however, on which Britain and France may still be divided. The French conception of a security system was narrower and more rigid than the British. The Anglo-Soviet Alliance indicates exactly

that preoccupation with the need for counteracting German influence in central and eastern Europe which has been the dominating consideration in French policy since 1887 and which has again been strikingly affirmed in the Franco-Russian Alliance of December 1944. It cannot be too often or too strongly emphasized, however, that these Alliances are merely the first steps in the construction of a universal security system, into which the eventual admission of the vanquished Powers is intended. Britain, though she is more conscious than hitherto of her duties to Europe and of the sacrifices which they will involve, cannot concentrate exclusively on the Continent. As an Imperial Power her interests compel her to take a wide view of the security problem and the extent to which this view can be reconciled with French policy, still mainly concerned with continental problems, is a question at once highly speculative and extremely important.

In the immediate future Britain's main concern is to ensure that she is able to keep the promises which she has already made and in particular to make good her commitments to Russia, upon which the stability of Europe and her own safety so largely depend. The first condition of effective military action in Europe, and therefore of an effective British foreign policy, is a continental base from which her armies may operate if they are called upon to do so. This means close friendship with some Power in western Europe ready to share our commitments and to co-operate with us in their enforcement. It is easy to see that without French assistance it would be difficult for Britain to bring aid to Russia or any other European ally, at any rate in the first stages of a future war. It would be equally hard, without the friendship of France, to protect the Low Countries against attack. A France, not merely neutral but hostile to Britain, would make passage through the Mediterranean extremely difficult, if not entirely impossible, and that would involve the closing of the easiest route by which supplies could be conveyed to Russia and the Balkan countries. The advantages to Britain of a close and lasting alliance with France were always considerable; in the light of our new obligations and of

our intention to participate fully in European affairs they amount to necessity. To appreciate that necessity is in no way to exclude the idea of a wider system of international co-operation. It is merely to recognize that for obvious geographical reasons the effectiveness of British participation in such a system, and therefore the possibility of establishing and maintaining the system at all, depends upon close co-operation between Britain and France. To claim this priority for Anglo-French relations is to acknowledge their vital importance as a means to wider ends.

Such an alliance can only be achieved, however, if France as well as Britain is prepared to accept its implications. Future French policy is still not fully defined. No alternative could, indeed, give France the security offered by a close association with Britain, but other things than reason and the calculation of interest will play their part in deciding her choice.



### *Chapter III*

#### *ALTERNATIVE POLICIES OPEN TO FRANCE*

The outlines of future French policy are by degrees becoming clearer. Even during the occupation the Underground Press gave some evidence of the trends of French opinion, though it would have been dangerous to base generalizations about public opinion as a whole on the views of a heroic minority. Since the liberation a flourishing Press has appeared in Paris and the problems of foreign policy are being discussed with the critical acumen and uncompromising conviction for which French political controversy is famous. Important pronouncements have been made by members of the Provisional Government and debates on foreign policy have taken place in the Consultative Assembly. Above all, the Franco-Russian Alliance, so full of potentialities for the future, has been made. There can be no doubt either that though the present Government is provisional its undertakings will be regarded as binding by future Governments. Thus what a few months ago was matter for speculation can now be discussed with more assurance in the light of more reliable evidence.

#### *CURRENT OPINION*

All this new evidence confirms previous impressions. The ideals of French Resistance have been shown to be the ideals of France, and the views of foreign policy (a subject in which the Resistance showed a surprising interest) disseminated at the hazard of life and liberty by a minority for the most part unrepresentative of the old political classes, have become the basis of official policy. French opinion is to-day overwhelmingly convinced of the need for maintaining Allied unity after the war. The double connection with Britain and Russia is wholeheartedly accepted as the foundation of French policy in Europe. This conviction, though it is strengthened by sentiment, is fundamentally rational and the product of precise and cautious

calculation. It is to be remembered also that the virtues and advantages of Allied unity are not in France, as they are in Britain, matters of assumption. These arguments have not lost their vitality through endless repetition, and what in safer places has declined into platitude appears to France, subjected for four years to the incessant bombardment of German propaganda, with the force of revelation. Nothing which is said in this chapter should be allowed to obscure the tremendous enthusiasm with which the French people look to the future of Allied co-operation. Other factors, however, must also be weighed. Considerations which today seem of no account or have been relegated to the background might exert, in different circumstances and when the emotions of gratitude and relief have abated, a decisive influence on policy. It may be important for the friends of France to recognize that there are dangers in her present situation which are all the more formidable for being momentarily out of sight. Certainly nothing could be more perilous for Britain than the complacent assumption that since the French love us so much there is no need to trouble about preserving their affection.

### MATERIAL RECOVERY

One consideration which is of paramount importance to any estimate of the future course of French policy is still uncertain. The liberation of France was accomplished far more quickly and with far less material destruction than even the most optimistic dared to hope. Even so, the material condition of the country is very serious, and, as General de Gaulle has often emphasized, it will take years of hard and devoted work to re-establish a normal economy. At the moment of writing the transport system is still totally disorganized and until it is restored there can be no serious attack on the problems of material restoration. A part of French industrial plant has been destroyed by the enemy, the Maquis, and the Allied Air Forces and still more has deteriorated through neglect during the years of occupation. It may still be long before France can build up a military and economic strength adequate to her responsibili-

ties in the world. How long, will depend chiefly on the vigour of French leadership and the unity of the French people.

Power is a relative thing and few European countries have escaped the material effects of the war. Germany certainly has not and this is the comparison which is of most practical importance. In considering the place of France in post-war Europe the decline of her strength must be estimated not in relation to her power before the war but to the power of other States, friendly or hostile, with which her interests will bring her into contact in the future. If this rule is observed there seems to be no reason for pessimism. In any event, it is not only concrete and measurable assets which must be taken into account. The French nation has always displayed extraordinary powers of resilience and though the Peace of Frankfurt was infinitely less crippling than the armistice of 1940 the speed with which France recovered after 1870 is a precedent worth remembering.

One theory need not be given too much importance. Social and moral causes partly contributed to the defeat of France in 1940 as they certainly did to the initial failure of a number of British military enterprises and as they may have done, for all a distant observer can say, to the loss of Pearl Harbour. The idea that the French nation is in the last stages of exhaustion perhaps still has its adherents but they are generally to be found among those who regard Europe as a whole as being in the same case. But one thing is clear, that no European Power could have survived alone the German onslaught in 1940 and this is virtually what France was called on to do. Russia, with economic and military strength greatly superior to that of Germany, only barely escaped defeat in 1941, and but for the Channel Britain might well have shared the fate of France.

### THREE SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Since 1940 three schools of thought have emerged from discussions among Frenchmen of their country's future policy. There have been those who from the first have looked to the victory of the United Nations and to co-operation with them after the war as the only means of wiping out the effects of the

capitulation and restoring France to her former greatness. This school of thought seems, to some extent, to be divided between those who look principally towards Britain and those who attach more importance to relations with Russia. There can be no doubt that, whatever the position in 1940, the overwhelming majority of Frenchmen now belong to this first main category. It is difficult to imagine any change in French opinion on these fundamental questions unless existing goodwill were to be dissipated either by errors of United Nations' policy towards France or by misrepresentation of that policy to France. The second school of thought which, for practical purposes, is at present extinct, consisted of those who, like Laval, claimed to see in collaboration with Germany not merely an unpleasant necessity imposed by a military disaster but a basis for the future organization of Europe and the recognition of a historic truth, namely, that Europe is a single entity and that Germany, by virtue of her geographical position and her natural genius for leadership, must preside over a politically united Continent. A doctrine was developed to explain and justify collaboration with Germany; few of its exponents have survived the liberation, at any rate in the political sense, but it was of such a character as to permit of its re-appearance at some future time in a form which, superficially more attractive, would be fundamentally the same.

Another body of opinion has maintained that France's natural state is one of isolation from the other Great Powers and that she should seek security in neutrality possibly backed by a close *entente* with those other countries (Italy and Spain) which share her "Latin culture."

#### CO-OPERATION WITH THE ALLIES

It is unnecessary to examine at length the implications for France of a policy of full co-operation with the other United Nations on the basis of the Atlantic Charter. It will suffice to insist on the fact that it is this policy to which the overwhelming majority of Frenchmen now look for security in the future. France is already well prepared for such a policy, and the main

danger to its realization comes perhaps from an insufficient recognition in Britain and America of the extent to which she is so prepared as well as from a certain failure, understandable in the circumstances, to sympathize with the psychology of a country which has suffered German occupation. It is important that Englishmen should understand the strength of the element of violence in the French situation. The state of mind induced by the experiences of the last four and a half years in France is one of violent hopes and fears. It is important that the great fund of enthusiasm shall not be dried up by failure to respond to it, or that fears about the future course of British and American policy which may seem to those who have seen that policy developing from close and comparatively secure quarters to be fantastic, shall not be either ignored or mistaken for malevolence. There are great possibilities for good and for ill in the present state of French feeling. Britain must play her part in bringing about a more stable condition of confidence. This means, in the immediate post-war period, not only a great task of explanation, an attempt to present the British case to France and to remove fears which have been aroused by misunderstandings in the past and more particularly by the difficult relationship which has existed between the two countries since 1940, but also acts of policy designed to convince the French of Britain's intention to accept the responsibilities of a European Power and to make her contribution (which the French mind associates with military service) to the maintenance of European security. Her contribution in naval strength has always been great, but this very fact has tended to make Britain rely on a strategy which puts upon our allies an excessive burden at the beginning of a war. To some Frenchmen the fact that Britain always wins the last battle may seem less important than the fact that Germany tends to win all the previous ones and that it is the previous ones which, on the whole, are fought by, and in, France. If French fears on this score can be removed, and if it is clear that Britain intends to have a European policy and to play her full part in carrying that policy out, there is every reason for believing that the French ideal of an integrated Europe will be a bond of unity

with Britain rather than a source of tension between the two countries. The sense of European unity which Hitler has exploited and which has always played an important part in French thought, can as well further the interests of British as those of German policy if it is recognized here that Britain, though not a part of the Continent, is a part of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

### COLLABORATION WITH GERMANY

It is almost certain that the extent to which a powerfully organized Fifth Column, subsidized by Germany, contributed to the defeat of France has been exaggerated. On the whole the collaborationists were the product rather than the cause of defeat. To a large extent, therefore, collaboration may be regarded as a temporary phenomenon which is not likely to survive the circumstances which produced it. Nevertheless, the fact that a not inconsiderable part of those classes which have hitherto been politically effective in France lent itself more or less readily to collaboration with Germany cannot be overlooked. Collaborationist propaganda though it came to acquire a more conservative colour, was directed, in the main, towards presenting German victory as an instrument of social revolution in Europe. It appealed to the idea which has always been important in certain Left-wing circles in France of a closely integrated continental system in which divisions of class would supersede divisions of nationality and which would be organized on a basis of centralized political and economic control. It was aimed at making France conscious of her position as a continental Power and inducing her to cut her connections permanently with Britain, whose policy has been interpreted as that of an oceanic Power with an interest in keeping Europe divided in order to derive political and commercial advantages at the expense of the continental nations. It is obvious that the conception of the balance of power, in terms of which British policy is generally construed on the Continent, lends itself to this sort of misinterpretation and it was not difficult for the "collaborationists"

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the report the word "Europe" is used to include Britain. Wherever reference is intended only to the Continent, this will be specified.

to illustrate their argument by examples from British policy in the last twenty years.

These arguments were reinforced by an appeal to economics. For obvious geographical reasons French heavy industry has, in the past, been linked closely with the heavy industry of Germany. The heavy industry of western continental Europe is a natural economic unit. It was easier for French industrialists to enter into arrangements (for the supply of essential materials, for the division of markets, and for the regulation of prices) with the industrialists of the Ruhr than it was to make similar arrangements with British, Dominion, and American industry. A certain amount of such co-operation was inevitable and desirable, but partly because of the relative weakness of French industry and partly because of the fact that German industrialists were generally ready to subordinate their own interests to the aggressive purposes of the German State, such co-operation was less a factor making for understanding between the two countries than an instrument of German penetration. It served the German propagandists well since 1940 as one more argument for the absorption of France into a purely continental system.

The idea of France as a purely continental Power thus has some foundation in material interest as well as an ideological basis. The decisive reply to it is, of course, the experience of the last four and a half years and the fact that an exclusively continental system in which Germany is included tends inevitably to become an exclusively German system in which the Continent is included. Given a radically different kind of Germany with some ideological affinities with France, given for example a Germany which was Communist and a France which was Communist and given, at the same time, the conviction in France that Britain was not willing to accept the responsibilities of a European Power and to make the sacrifices which they entail, another period of collaboration might not be entirely out of the question. In estimating this possibility it must be remembered that the proposition of the "collaborationists" was co-operation with a victorious Germany, and that this proposition is obviously less easily sustained than would be the case for co-operation

with a Germany which seemed to be too weak to constitute an immediate danger to France. Since this is likely to be the condition of Germany for a long time after the war, the possibility of a revival of collaborationism, although at present remote, may be more worthy of consideration than those who look at French politics from a purely contemporary point of view might imagine. It would not be a case of France choosing deliberately an alliance with Germany in preference to an alliance with Britain. It would rather be a gradual process of orientation towards the Continent and away from Britain and America. It might present itself at first rather in the form of an attempt at some exclusive partnership with Russia than of a German alliance, and it would find expression in the language which Hitler exploited, but did not invent, of the new European order. By slow degrees hostility towards Germany might be succeeded as the dominant factor in French policy by scepticism about the intentions of Britain or her capacity for effective intervention on the Continent.

What this policy would mean for France on a long view is not difficult to assess. The advantage to her of the Entente with Britain consisted mainly in the fact that Britain alone was in a position to give immediate aid in the first phases of a war with Germany. In a Europe from which Britain was absent the superiority of German resources in industry and man-power could not be offset by France alone, or even by France and Russia; the Russian connection can never be a substitute for the Entente with Britain but must remain its necessary complement. Russian aid cannot be rapid enough to save France from the first and decisive blows from across the Rhine. If France succumbs, Germany has an unchallengeable ascendancy in western Europe, is free to concentrate her might against Russia and has the Continent at her feet. The only excuse for giving her the opportunity of such domination would be the belief that she would not wish to use it, and that belief is not justified by previous experience. For years after the liberation the memory of German oppression will still be vivid and will still be the most important influence on French policy. Nevertheless, it will be well for



those responsible for forming British policy to remember that if the hopes which the French people now have in Britain (and those hopes are very high) were to be disappointed some reaction in the direction indicated above might well follow. "Collaborationism" is, in the last resort, a counsel of despair, something to be resorted to when all else has failed.

#### ISOLATION AND THE LATIN BLOC

It is not hard to see the disadvantage for France of the policy (namely, neutrality and the Latin *bloc*) advocated by the third school of thought mentioned above. As an exclusive arrangement, such a combination would lack altogether the military and industrial potential necessary to its survival. The policy would be attended in the last resort by the same effects as those which attended Vichy's sporadic attempts to pursue it after 1940. The paradox of ever-increasing subservience to Germany combined with increasingly vociferous protestations of the resolve of France to depend only upon herself, would almost certainly be repeated. The plain fact is that such a policy would not provide France with that support against a sudden German attack, which is the first condition of her security. Neutrality would be neutrality upon German terms. It is important, however, to recognize that if the impression were to be given that Britain was not willing to accord to France her proper place in a reorganized Europe there might be in France a violent, purely emotional, reaction in the direction of intense nationalism, expressing itself in a self-conscious aloofness from the other Great Powers. Whereas the basis of "collaborationism" has been doubt about the will and capacity of Britain for effective intervention on the Continent, the policy of the Latin *bloc* would be more likely to be a response to the threat of Anglo-Saxon "domination."

*CONDITIONS OF ANGLO-FRENCH CO-OPERATION*

If Anglo-French co-operation is to be achieved each of the two countries must know exactly what the other expects to gain from the partnership.

In the eyes of some Englishmen and of some Frenchmen considerations of sentiment would be sufficient in themselves to justify the subordination of almost every other object of policy to the end of friendship between the two countries. It would be fatal, however, to depend absolutely upon this common desire for co-operation as an end in itself. Only a small number of Englishmen comes within this class of francophiles. In France there is a tradition of interest in and admiration for Britain among certain scholars (notably among political scientists who value Britain as the type of the successful democracy). In addition to this there is also at present an overwhelming desire for co-operation with the United Nations and a strong desire for especially close co-operation with Britain. This feeling, however, deriving as it does partly from admiration for Britain's bearing in 1940 and only in part from a conscious calculation of strategic interest, cannot be counted upon to last for ever, independently of the course of British policy, for the memory of 1940 may fade and there are many long-standing grievances against Britain which, though temporarily in abeyance, may again arise to divert calculation.

Considerable sections of the British public are either indifferent or even averse to the idea of Franco-British co-operation. Towards the end of the nineteenth century France was associated in the minds of many Englishmen with the ideas of political instability and domestic infidelity, and this association still persists, if less blatantly. Those Englishmen who regard the accomplishments of the French mind as an adequate reason for an alliance with France are neither numerous nor influential enough to offset completely this less-informed but more popu-

lar reaction. The events of 1940 and their consequences are still vividly remembered and there is a widespread sense of having been "let down" by Britain. The defeat of the French in the war, to some extent accepted as the result of military and industrial weakness, but many Frenchmen felt that other causes, notably the failure of the French Government to contain the war from Africa - 1, the actions of a large part of the French fleet, the evacuation of Poland in 1939 and, perhaps most seriously, the events in Syria, showed such defects in the French character as to preclude any reliance being placed in the future of France or an ally. This view, largely emotional, has been progressively modified by the events within France during 1944. The declaration of the force of the opposition to Vichy, the work of the Maquis and the self-liberation of Paris have gone far to efface previous impressions, but it must be admitted that there are still many Englishmen who would be late to welcome an Anglo-French alliance as the main cornerstone of future security.

Many powerful and firmly established forces in France militate against co-operation. There is still fresh in many French minds the memory of bitter colonial rivalry extending over several centuries. There is the wide spread assumption among Frenchmen that the military defeat of France was due to the wavering and inadequate support she received from Britain in the inter-war period, as well as to the paucity of Britain's resources of trained man-power in the first year of the war. There are many latent resentments arising out of the policy which Britain was forced to adopt towards France between 1940 and 1944, and which has involved treating French territory in some respects as enemy territory. We have to remember that this country with which we are seeking to co-operate has been bombed by our Air Forces and blockaded by our Navy, and that until recently it was represented in its dealings with us by authorities upon which we felt unable to confer any clear diplomatic status and which were therefore embarrassingly conscious of their dependence upon us. During this period disputes between Frenchmen over questions on which the whole future of their country de-

pended were necessarily conducted on British soil or on territory occupied by Anglo-American armies and consequently became in some measure the concern of British policy. Any treatment of these matters was sure to arouse some resentment among some Frenchmen and a judicious treatment, aimed at displaying the least possible partisanship, was probably certain to arouse the maximum of resentment. There were until recently loyal supporters of General de Gaulle who interpreted British policy towards these questions as being aimed at the perpetuation of the power in France of Frenchmen whom they regarded as traitors; critics from a different angle accused Britain of having "backed the Gaullists" and of allying herself with a faction; others entertained suspicions that British and American policy had been subtly manipulated with the object of obtaining commercial and strategic advantages at the expense of France. None of these suspicions, which for the most part remained latent, is incompatible with the persistence of a strong and genuine desire among most Frenchmen for understanding with us, but it is noticeable that at times of crisis, as for instance during the crisis in the Lebanon, the suspicions come to the fore and there is always, in French comment on Britain, a consistent undertone of conviction that we do not understand, and that in the nature of things we cannot understand, the feelings of Frenchmen who have endured German occupation. Even action, the need for which most Frenchmen recognized, such as the bombing of strategic objects in France or our attacks on the French fleet, might one day be held against us when Frenchmen have forgotten their own divisions and remember only the greatness of their country and its bitter humiliation since 1940.

Bearing these obstacles in mind it would be useless to appeal only or chiefly to sentiment. Co-operation must, in the last resort, depend in each country on the conviction that the support of the other is necessary to its survival. The Anglo-French Entente lasted with occasional intermissions for forty years, although often during that period there was a lamentable lack of understanding between the two peoples. The Entente was clinched in consequence of the instinctive response to a common peril.

So long as the peril lasts, and for any foreseeable period it is likely to last, the foundations of Franco-British co-operation will be present also, but the nature of these foundations must be clearly understood in both countries. It is a condition of this understanding that Anglo-French relations should be de-emotionalized and that in the first instance at any rate the appeal should be clearly directed to national interest and based upon those facts of geography and power which make co-operation between the two countries equally necessary to the security of each of them. From these beginnings there may eventually develop (and we should try to ensure that there shall develop) a sense of common function in the service of humanity. Thus, even when the German menace has been—or may seem to have been—abolished, the two countries will be faced with the vital need for giving a joint lead to all the countries of western Europe in reconstruction and world co-operation. In the first instance, however, we must be content with less.

### 1. WHAT FRANCE EXPECTS OF BRITAIN

What France expects of Britain may be considered under three heads: (a) independence, (b) recognition of France's place as one of the great European Powers, and (c) full participation by Britain in the performance of their common tasks in post-war Europe.

#### (a) INDEPENDENCE

Britain, in common with the rest of the United Nations, is pledged to assist in the restoration of full independence to the French people. In so far as this pledge meant simply the removal of the German army from French territory it is probably true to say that few Frenchmen seriously doubted its fulfilment after the liberation of North Africa. The restoration of normal institutions in France and of the right of free choice to the French people, on the other hand, presented the Allies, as well as the French themselves, with perplexing problems. In the first place, it was essential that the Vichy administration should not retain power in France after the arrival of Allied forces. Had

it seemed, it might well have explained the military preoccupations of the Allies and the corresponding state of French life in order to increase and strengthen its power. The presence of General de Gaulle's army, however, was complete was not a sufficient guarantee against the danger. The Vichy administration, had it remained in power while such elections were held, would not have been at a loss to find means for inducing their result. It was equally clear, however, that any attempt on the part of the Allied military authorities to assume direct control of civil affairs would have led to force and justified re-armament and would have certainly diminished the chances of achieving that permanent understanding among the Allies on which the future of Europe largely hangs.

Thus the problem was to ensure that the task of civil administration should be entrusted to a French authority representing, as far as possible, the authentic will of France and that the authority should achieve a position corresponding to that of the other Provisional Governments of the occupied territories. In the case of France, however, the link of legal continuity had been broken. It was extremely important therefore that nothing should be done which might lay the Allies open to the charge of being partisan. Although as time went on it became increasingly clear that General de Gaulle and his colleagues commanded the loyalty of the Resistance movement, there was still room for doubt as to whether the organized and politically-conscious Resistance movement had the sympathy of most Frenchmen in so far as its objects went beyond victory. From the British point of view the question was complicated still more by the need for preserving Allied unity. A decision of such critical importance could be taken only with the agreement of the principal Allies, and though British policy continually emphasized the special interest of this country in the strength and well-being of France, an independent recognition by Britain of General de Gaulle's Committee might have led to serious embarrassments. This was a matter of common concern to all the Allies, and particularly to the United States, whose military contribution to the liberation of France must necessarily be

greater in sheer weight of numbers and equipment than our own.

Arrangements for civil administration in French Metropolitan territory were far from complete when the Allied invasion began, and military operations had been in progress for some weeks before formal agreements between Britain, France, and America were made. In practice, however, the problem solved itself. Soon after the entry of Allied troops into Normandy the French Committee of National Liberation, which had by this time assumed the title of Provisional Government, appointed its own delegate to control civil affairs in that region, and after that the French authorities automatically took over control in all liberated territory. In some instances the men of the Maquis succeeded in unseating the Vichy officials and installed themselves in office long before the Allied armies arrived. General de Gaulle's Committee was soon formally recognized as a Provisional Government by Great Britain, the United States, and the U.S.S.R. It now has all the attributes of sovereignty including, after some initial misunderstanding, control of the issue of currency. It was radically reorganized after the liberation of Paris and now contains, as well as numerous representatives of Resistance, the respected President of the Senate, M. Jeanneney, representatives of the old political parties, and indeed of all sections of articulate French opinion. Its broad composition would seem to afford adequate protection against any attempt on the part of a faction to impose itself on the French people. Further protection is provided by the Consultative Assembly which, recruited largely from the ranks of the Resistance groups but also including many members of the Chamber of Deputies, was set up to advise the Committee while it was still in Algiers and has since shown itself capable of vigilant and effective criticism. General elections are to be held as soon as prisoners and conscript workers return from Germany, and in the meantime the laws of the Third Republic are being everywhere re-established. Discussion is becoming freer and the newspapers which were published secretly by the Resistance groups during the occupation emerged into the open when Paris was liberated to form the nucleus of a restored national Press.

The French nation, by its own action, is rapidly regaining its political liberties and grappling valiantly and successfully with the practical tasks of national restoration by which it is now faced. Thus, in effect, the expectation of independence has already been realized. Not only is this so, but the harmonious co-operation which was early achieved between French officials and the Allied military authorities is bound to have a lasting and beneficent effect on relations between the three Allies.

The consistent support which Britain gave to the view that French administration during the period of Allied operations on French territory must be the responsibility and, as far as possible the exclusive responsibility, of Frenchmen was widely appreciated in France and was rightly interpreted as evidence of the paramount importance which the British Government attaches to relations between the two Powers.

#### (b) FRANCE AS A GREAT POWER

The principle of equality between the nations already enunciated in the Atlantic Charter was again expressed in the joint declaration which followed the Three-Power Conference in Moscow of October, 1943. The most concrete result of that Conference was, however, the establishment of a European Commission, composed of representatives of Great Britain, Russia, and America, with the task of reporting on European problems to these Governments. This Commission obviously occupies a central position and may become the supreme organ of United Nations' co-operation in the political sphere. It is likely that the countries represented in it will provide the nucleus of the Peace Conference if there is one, and it is not therefore surprising that the French Committee of Liberation showed some anxiety at its exclusion and made it clear in particular that it would not regard as binding any decisions about the future of Germany which were reached without consultation with France.

To recognize that all Powers are equal before the law in the sense of being entitled to the same protection against aggression is not to deny that those countries which must carry the chief burden of implementing collective decisions should have a cor-



respondingly larger share in making those decisions. This principle was acknowledged in the formation of the European Commission and has since been stated explicitly in the proposals of the Dumbarton Oaks Conference. At the Peace Conference at Paris most of the major decisions, including the terms of the peace with Germany, were settled by a Council of the Great Powers, the smaller Powers having for the most part to content themselves with the statement of their grievances, either orally or in writing, either before the Council or before some of the numerous Territorial Commissions which were established by it. It may be that this precedent will not be followed at the next Peace Conference, but it is equally certain that the smaller Powers will not have as great a share in the making of peace as their larger neighbours. The experience of the Congress of Vienna and of the Conference at Paris alike confirm Castle-reagh's judgment that completely equal representation is "incompatible with the march of business." If the need for a degree of inequality in representation is accepted, it follows naturally that this inequality must reflect the facts of power and that the chief responsibility for making the peace settlement must rest with those countries which alone dispose of the means of preserving it. The French Committee of Liberation was reinforced by the Consultative Assembly and the Resistance movement in demanding that France should be regarded as one of those Powers. The demand was in effect that the representatives of France should take part, on equal terms with those of Great Britain, America, and Russia, in the peace negotiations and in the consultations which will precede them and which will very largely determine their course.

The anxiety of French opinion on this subject would in any circumstances be understandable. Even when the theory of equality was most widely and uncritically accepted, authority was seen in practice to depend upon power and was vested in those countries which had the material strength to sustain it. For better or for worse, this inconsistency between theory and practice has now been overcome—at the cost of theory. Dumbarton Oaks shows the extent to which the process has gone and

this trend of thought made it inevitable that a country like France, which occupied an intermediate position, should seek unreserved recognition of its place among the privileged. It is hardly too much to say that satisfaction on this point was a *sine qua non* of future co-operation.

The case as stated by the French was largely retrospective. France had been a Great Power and if she had temporarily lost that status this was in large measure the result of her own misfortunes and of the political mistakes of her Allies. She alone had opposed the challenge of German aggression at the side of Britain in 1939. Important parts of her empire had never been out of the war and had given continuous, valuable, and largely unacknowledged assistance to the Allies. More recently her people had given powerful aid to the Allied armies in the most daring of all their undertakings. Thus tradition and performance entitled her to a place of authority among the Powers. Then there were the traditional talents of French statesmanship. Few people would deny that French statesmen know more about Europe than British statesmen who are, nevertheless, reputed to know more about it than Americans. It would, in any case, be a little ironic if Europe were to be reorganized by three Powers, one of which was extra-continental, another extra-European, and a third largely Asiatic.

These considerations do not, however, afford a full explanation. Great Powers are in practice those whose co-operation is necessary to the maintenance of a Peace Settlement, and which by withholding such co-operation can destroy a Peace Settlement. Tradition and past performance are not enough to confer this capacity, which depends on material strength and strategic position.

In area, potential economic resources and population, France has latterly been the next strongest Power to Germany in the western half of the Continent. How this position will be finally affected by the events which have taken place since 1940 cannot be foreseen, but it seems probable that the degree of devastation which France will have suffered will be relatively less, maybe very much less, than that suffered by Germany. The moral

effect of occupation also seems to have been exactly the reverse of that intended by the enemy; and after a transitional period of confusion it may be that France will achieve a unity hitherto unknown in her history. History shows that it would certainly be a mistake to underestimate her powers of resilience. Her present material and economic strength however is not comparable with that of Great Britain, Russia, and America, and therefore could not in itself convey the title to political equality with those countries.

Her claim to recognition as a Great Power is strongest when considered in relation to her key position in a European security system. The minimum condition of European security (and it is only a minimum) is now generally acknowledged to be the creation of such a system of alliance as will ensure that in the event of Germany again resorting to aggression she will have to face a war on two fronts. If France were not to co-operate willingly in the security system, this elementary condition of its success would be absent. Even leaving aside the powerful military contribution which France herself may in time be able to make, even considering France in a purely passive aspect as a base for Anglo-American intervention in Europe (and she will plainly be much more), it is clear that her co-operation is indispensable. It is hard, for example, to envisage the possibility of Anglo-American intervention being based solely on Scandinavia or on the Low Countries. Scandinavia would not offer sufficiently wide bases for effective operations whereas an offensive base in Holland would always be at the mercy of a hostile France. Similarly, France holds a commanding position in the western Mediterranean and will continue to do so after the war. The importance of this life-line in a general system of security, both from the point of view of British imperial interests and from that of securing rapid communications with our Russian and Balkan Allies, will not today be disputed. It is hard indeed to imagine what the prospect of Allied arms in this war would have been had the French North African empire fallen under German control in 1940 or had it been impossible to count on French aid for the Allied landings on that coast line

in 1942. For these strategic reasons it would seem that the claim of France to equal representation with the other Great Powers in the counsels of the United Nations is unanswerable. The argument is clear: without French adherence an indispensable element in the European security system would be lacking and it is a condition of that adherence that France should be fully consulted in the formulation of the Peace Settlement, and should, in other respects, be accorded a position equal to that of Great Britain, Russia, and America.

The Allied Governments, after some initial hesitation, came to recognize the force of these considerations, and the French claim to representation at the highest level has been conceded in a number of important instances. On November 11th, 1944, France was invited to join the European Commission; at the Yalta Conference (February 4th to 11th, 1945) it was agreed to give France a place on the Allied Control Commission in Berlin, the body responsible for presiding over the Allied administration of conquered Germany. France is also to be a permanent member of the Security Council, the most powerful organ in the New League envisaged at Dumbarton Oaks, and was invited to join with Britain, Russia, America, and China in sponsoring invitations to the San Francisco Conference, April 1945, to discuss the Dumbarton Oaks proposals.<sup>1</sup> The important part which British policy has taken in these decisions is worthy of emphasis and again reflects the special interest which Britain has in a strong and friendly France. There has in the past been some tactlessness and ambiguity in Allied policy towards the French and the most recent instance of this was France's exclusion from the Yalta Conference. The criticism it aroused, outside as well as inside France, will probably be a sufficient guarantee against the repetition of such mistakes which certainly do not reflect the true spirit and purpose of Allied policy.

<sup>1</sup> This invitation was declined, the French Government not wishing to commit itself to proposals (particularly the controversial proposal for the voting procedure worked out at Yalta and embodied in the invitation which the sponsoring Powers were to send out) which had been agreed on in her absence.

### (c) PARTICIPATION OF BRITAIN IN EUROPE

The military value to France of the connection with Britain consists principally in the prospect it affords of immediate assistance in the event of an attack from across the Rhine. In the past, Anglo-French co-operation has been based on the tacit assumption that, at any rate in the first phases of a war, the chief part of the military burden should be borne by France, whereas British assistance should, in the first instance, be confined to naval blockade of the enemy. In the last war, though Great Britain assumed a substantial military burden long before that date, she did not introduce conscription until 1916. Conscription was again adopted in this country a few months before the beginning of the present war, but not in time to provide a large continental army to take part in the Battle of France. The maintenance of an army of continental size in peace-time is contrary to the firmly established British tradition, but our reluctance to depart from that tradition has been one of the principal sources of misunderstanding with France in the past. The guarantee given to Poland in the spring of 1939 constituted a diplomatic revolution which has since been completed by the conclusion of a military alliance with Soviet Russia. Britain has overcome her traditional reluctance to undertake direct military commitments in Europe and is now committed to intervention not only in the affairs of the western half of the Continent which most immediately and obviously affect her security, but also to the military support of the Soviet Union in eastern Europe. It is important that all the implications of this revolution and of the changed position of Britain in regard to the Continent should not only be understood but should clearly appear to be understood, since our continental Allies will measure the value of our pledges by the extent of the resources with which we are prepared to support them. This is particularly so in the case of France. The French people are conscious that they cannot withstand alone the first impact of a German attack. They wish to be assured not only of the long-term assistance provided by naval blockade and of the economic support of Britain's industrial strength but also of active military assistance from the very

start of a war not only in the air but on land. Any misgivings inspired by past experience are met by recent statements of British policy regarding military service; and it is evident that henceforth Britain will be not only willing but able to contribute and maintain her share of trained man-power on an equal basis with other States of comparable resources, to the provision of the forces necessary to maintain the European peace settlement.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. WHAT BRITAIN EXPECTS OF FRANCE

### STATE OF BRITISH FEELING

This inquiry would serve little purpose if it did not frankly recognize that British feeling towards France is not, at the moment, universally cordial.<sup>2</sup> Many of the prejudices which Englishmen have against the French may be dissipated by a process of education which is greatly needed. Recent events moreover have tended to impress upon British public opinion that their own insular security is dependent upon the security of France, Belgium, and the Low Countries, and that if they are to assist in the preservation of the frontiers of western Europe they must be prepared for Great Britain to be massively present on the Continent. This change in British opinion may go far to remove previous French criticisms of the British tendency to assume that continental western Europe can defend itself by its own efforts alone. To that extent one of the main causes of misunderstanding may gradually be removed. The difficulty will remain however that whereas the French will continue to interpret security in terms of their eastern frontier, the British will continue to regard security in oceanic rather than in continental terms.

<sup>1</sup>In the House of Commons on May 10th, 1945, the Prime Minister expressed his "personal and political conviction" that the duty of defence should be shared by all members of the community. Mr Ernest Bevin, in a speech to the Labour Party Conference on May 23rd, 1945, committed the Labour Party to the retention of National Service, though in a modified form, even after the end of the Japanese war. The need for some degree of compulsory military service into the post-war period, a need which is fundamental to the whole of British policy in Europe, is thus no longer a matter of controversy between the main political parties.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 35.

## OBLIGATIONS TO THE DOMINIONS

The fact that Britain is the centre of a great society of independent nations, scattered with a supreme disrespect for geopolitics, all over the world, and of a colonial empire distributed with the same contempt for the logic of geography, will always create a tendency towards divergence. France, it is true, is also an imperial Power, and much more conscious of the fact than she has been for many years, but the fact that many of the most valued parts of her empire are geographically an extension of Europe and that their defence is therefore primarily a European question, makes a conflict between the claims of Europe and the claims of the empire difficult to imagine. The defence of her Pacific possessions could not vie with the defence of her eastern frontier in claims upon military strength. Such a conflict of loyalties is impossible, for one of them is universally agreed to be subordinate to the other.

Far from there being any incompatibility between a policy directed on the one hand towards the strengthening of Commonwealth unity and on the other towards the assumption by Britain of European responsibilities commensurate with her power and prestige on the Continent, these policies have been repeatedly shown to be complementary to each other. The Dominions have come increasingly to regard their association with Britain as a means to wider ends and to maintain it not only on grounds of self-interest but because they believe it to be an essential element in the organization of world peace. Britain's ties with the Dominions have always been strongest when she herself has pursued broad and generous policies. Her efforts to make the League of Nations an effective instrument for the maintenance of law received the practical and unstinted aid of the Dominions, and the unity of the Commonwealth was never more complete than when Britain led the League in the imposition of Sanctions against Italy. The speeches of the Dominions Prime Ministers at the Imperial Conference of May 1944 showed a unanimous insistence on the view that the Commonwealth could only survive as part of a wider system of international obligations.

In any future organization for the preservation of peace Britain's principal function must for obvious geographical reasons be the defence of western Europe. From time to time this may absorb the greater part of her purely military power, but even when Britain is fighting a war in Europe her navy and her air force are still capable of giving to the Dominions a measure of assistance with which they can ill afford to dispense and for which Dominions support for British policy in Europe has in the past been regarded as a fair price. Thus there can be no possibility of Britain's duties to the Dominions again being made the pretext for unduly limited commitments in Europe, but at the same time the need for assuming new responsibilities to the European Continent cannot justify the neglect of our existing obligations to the Dominions. France cannot legitimately expect from us that exclusive concentration on continental affairs which she herself cultivates, and the conspicuous part which Canadian troops have played in her liberation is a pertinent reminder of the advantages which she has derived from Britain's insistence that the defence of the Dominions must be an important charge on British policy. There must of course be a proper system of priorities and the Commonwealth is too complex an organism to be treated for all purposes as a unit. When the existence of any one of its members is immediately threatened the first duty of that member is to preserve itself, but in so doing it can legitimately expect such aid as its fellow-members, having regard to actual claims upon their own strength, can give, and in return for this aid it must be ready to devote to the defence of the Commonwealth as a whole such part of its own resources as can be spared. A good example of how this complicated system of loyalties works is afforded by the mutual aid between Britain and Australia during the present war. These considerations have not always commanded sympathy in France where the character of Commonwealth relations has been widely misunderstood. A clearer understanding of the importance which British opinion attaches to our obligations to the Dominions is therefore an important condition of Anglo-French co-operation in the future.



## CONTINUITY OF POLICY

A further cause of misunderstanding is that whereas British Governments are comparatively stable, British policy on the Continent is often so imprecise as to appear variable; conversely although French policy in regard to the security of her eastern frontier has been in fact remarkably consistent, this consistency has often been obscured by the frequent Cabinet changes which were necessitated by the constitutional structure of France. It is not for Great Britain to suggest that a greater governmental continuity would be of advantage to France's foreign policy or for France to suggest that a more consistent and avowed continental policy on the part of Great Britain would be of value to future collaboration. But it is the duty of each side to appreciate and to explain the special difficulties of the other.

Many Frenchmen are increasingly aware of the need for constitutional reform designed to produce greater continuity by strengthening the executive, and the effect of any move in that direction, so long as it did not endanger the principle of consent, would certainly be that British opinion would become much more favourable to co-operation with France.

## INDUSTRIAL POTENTIAL

Finally, if Britain is in future to contribute her fair share of man-power to the maintenance of peace in Europe, she is entitled to look to France to develop greater industrial strength than she had in the past. The backwardness of French industrial development was largely responsible for the inadequacy of French re-armament. This fact is now absorbing the attention of most of those Frenchmen who are making plans for the reconstruction of their country, and if their resolve to increase the industrial potential of France is put into practice after the war, yet another formidable obstacle to full co-operation will be removed. Only by developing and co-ordinating to the fullest degree their industrial potentials can the two countries assure their own security, and make their appropriate and common contribution to the stability of western Europe.

## *Chapter V*

### *BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND SECURITY*

#### 1. EUROPEAN SECURITY

##### STRATEGY AND IDEALS

In the first instance, the basis of Anglo-French co-operation must be the recognition by both countries of a common strategic necessity. Even if no wider system of international relations were contemplated, this necessity would remain, and to establish it clearly has therefore been the chief concern of this Report. It is now necessary to correct this emphasis and to try to discover what function Anglo-French relations will have in that world-wide system of security at which the United Nations aim. The aim is clear, namely, the setting up of a form of international society which will not only remove or diminish the danger of aggression but will provide the basis for co-operation in the pursuit of more positive and far-reaching ends in the economic and cultural spheres.

The first task in the construction of such a system is the provision of adequate and general guarantee against aggression. The vindication of law is a prerequisite of progress, and therefore what are often described as the "negative" aspects of the security problem are nevertheless of fundamental importance and must take precedence over all others.

##### IMMEDIATE POST-WAR POSITION

In the immediate post-war phase, the first task of the United Nations will be to disarm the aggressors and make it impossible for them to gratify the desire for revenge which may safely be presumed in them. While it is safe to assume the total elimination of Germany and her satellites as factors in the distribution of military power in Europe for many years after the war, the duration of that period will depend principally upon the degree of unity which the Allies are able to maintain.

There can be little doubt that, on the day after the military

defeat of Germany, the two strongest European Powers will be Britain and Russia. The recovery of France may indeed be rapid but in the first instance her military strength will be comparatively slight. Russia, fresh from a brilliant series of military successes, will be both confident and strong.

America will also be represented in Europe in large numbers, and her influence on the peace must be taken into account not less than that of Russia. But there will constantly militate against that influence the fear of other Governments that she may return to isolation and their consequent unwillingness to commit themselves to policies, simply on the ground that they are approved by her, lest she should prove unready to play her part in applying them.

Britain's position will be complicated. On the one hand she is committed in general terms to a European policy and there can be no question of her withdrawing from continental politics. She has, in addition to this undertaking, many specific continental commitments including notably the Anglo-Soviet Alliance. She will be called upon to play a major part in the enforcement of measures designed to prevent German re-armament. At the same time she is a world Power and since she habitually looks to the Dominions to support her in Europe she cannot divest herself of obligations towards them. This dual responsibility is necessarily something of a handicap to the discharge of her purely European responsibilities. Some of her traditional sources of strength have been diminished. She no longer has that monopoly of industrial power to which, throughout a great part of the last century, she owed much of her political influence. The sea is no longer an adequate protection. Nobody can predict how far these changes will affect the position of Britain in the future, but they all tend to reduce the physical advantages she had hoped to enjoy and to make it necessary for her to compete with other countries, at most, on equal terms.

Thus the position is that in the first stages of peace there will be a virtual monopoly of military power in the hands of three great communities (Britain, Russia, and America), one of which is a part of Europe but not of the Continent, the other partly

European but also partly Asiatic, and the third entirely extra-European.

#### UNITY AND DIVERSITY

In all discussions of the problem of international organization there is a broad division of opinion between those who attach most importance to the achievement of unity and those whose main concern is for the preservation of diversity. It is to be expected that this difference of emphasis will be present in the discussions of the Great Powers upon whose leadership the construction of any enduring form of international co-operation must depend. In so far as they continue to be animated by the principles of the Atlantic Charter, Russian and American opinion is likely to conceive the "new world order" much more in terms of *cosmopolis*, which is to say in terms of a whole that is indivisible, than in terms of internationalism, which is to say in terms of a combination of many entities, each retaining its own peculiar excellence and each performing its own specific function within the larger unity. The "largest common measure of the integrated life of Europe" which Mr Churchill has spoken of as an end to be desired may seem more important to Russian and American minds than the preservation of the "individual characteristics and traditions of its many ancient and historic races" which he regards as a necessary qualification of the end.<sup>1</sup> Since nationalism is not likely to have declined in importance as a factor in the politics of Europe as a result of the present war, this problem will be crucial. For geographical and historical reasons Britain and France are in a particularly strong position to understand and sympathize with the general European sentiment in this matter. It will be their special function to insist upon the importance of ensuring that whatever system of international society is set up will leave adequate scope for the development and expression of national ideals within the framework of general co-operation.

Whatever the importance of the practical co-operation of Great Britain, the United States, and Russia in the preservation

<sup>1</sup> Broadcast speech, *The Times*, March 22, 1943.

of peace, these three Powers themselves have made it clear that their activities are to operate within a larger framework. A resolution of the Moscow Conference of October 1943, with which China is also associated, insisted on the need for "a general international organization, based on the sovereign equality of all peace-loving States, and open to membership by all such States, for the establishment of international peace and security." While the three Powers in question must for an indefinite period contribute the principal material forces required for the maintenance of peace, and consequently assume a considerable degree of leadership in such an organization, it is of the highest importance that other Powers should be associated with them on the broadest basis and that their responsibilities should be as widely shared as possible. In Europe, in particular, the association of France with Britain and Russia, and especially the close co-operation of France and Britain in respect of western Europe, is essential. The Dumbarton Oaks proposals leave ample scope for such an association. It cannot be denied however that they go a long way towards precisely that concentration of authority in the hands of the Great Powers which, though it is obviously a condition of any effective system of security, contains a potential threat to the position and influences of Europe in the world. The decision to include France on the Security Council reduces the preponderance of extra-European Powers, but the smaller European countries cannot hope to influence greatly the actions of the Council. Such influence as they do exert will be vicarious and will derive from the fact that Britain and France can be relied on to advocate faithfully and strenuously specifically European interests and ideas which might otherwise be neglected.

It is the dilemma of British policy that Britain cannot augment her strength without increasing her responsibilities and therefore the claims upon that strength. If Britain were able to assume the leadership of the ex-occupied and neutral countries in Europe (and particularly in western and southern Europe) she might hope so to strengthen her position as to make it possible for her to play a valuable and independent part in the world system, but to this course of action there are two objections,

the first a question of power, the second the psychological problem that arises from the difference between her own historical experience and more particularly her most recent experience, and that of the Continent.

The first difficulty cannot be discussed in detail here, though it must be observed that there is no evidence of any decline of the national vitality of the occupied countries, that their restoration to prosperity, if efficiently pursued (as there is every evidence that it will be pursued) may not take as long as pessimists imagine, and that their collective strength which, in any case, must be estimated in relation to a general decline of strength and to the complete elimination of Germany and her satellites as factors in the distribution of European power, may be substantially augmented if they co-operate with each other more closely than in the past.

The second difficulty is more serious and cannot be removed without the aid of France. The political and cultural influence of France throughout Europe, and particularly in the small countries, is too deeply rooted to have been obliterated by temporary German occupation which could repress it but could not provide a substitute for it. France has suffered in the same way as the smaller Powers and is likely to have greater sympathy with their determination to ensure that the calamity shall not recur than is Britain who has not. On the presence of France at the peace conference on equal terms with the other Great Powers will depend the representation of the Continent and the influence which continental opinion is to have on the resulting settlement. The representation will not be effective nor the influence considerable unless the power and world outlook of the United Kingdom is associated with French understanding of Europe. Absolute equality between all States in peace negotiations cannot be hoped for and is not perhaps desirable. What can be assured is that the general sentiments and interests of the small countries shall be expressed, if only vicariously, in the policies of at least some of the Great Powers. It is in the discharge of this function that the Anglo-French combination will acquire that positive purpose which is a necessary supplement to community

of strategic interest and without which nothing but a temporary and precarious association for limited ends is possible.

## 2. WESTERN SECURITY

If France and Britain are to have this common function, it is relevant to ask whether it should receive some kind of institutional expression on the lines suggested in the British Government's offer of union in 1940. The proposal was for a complete union based on common citizenship, formal association of the two parliaments and a joint War Cabinet. The circumstances in which it was made were hardly conducive to a favourable reception. It came to the French Cabinet on June 16th just after the news that M. Reynaud's appeal for American intervention had been refused; and though, according to General de Gaulle, ten members of the Government supported its acceptance, fourteen insisted on immediately suing for an armistice. The offer was subsequently interpreted by Vichy apologists as a meaningless substitute for the military equipment and support of which France was in so much need, and even as an effort to "turn France into a British Dominion"; while the majority of Frenchmen did not know of it at the time. British opinion was disposed to view it as a last and hopeless effort to keep France in the war. "Resisting" opinion inside France has come to regard it more positively; but though General de Gaulle, who himself telephoned the offer from London to M. Reynaud, suggested in the following year that he was disposed to consider it still open, this line has not been generally followed by him or his supporters, and with the emergence of Russia as a prospective major factor in the post-war world, it seems most unlikely that it will be further pursued. Though discussions regarding possibilities of closer association had been engaging opinion on both sides of the channel during the preceding months, it is clear that the proposal, coming at the moment it did, did not admit of the careful consideration which would normally be held necessary in the case of an offer of such all-embracing character.

Seen in retrospect, moreover, all the difficulties involved stand out clearly. There are several reasons for excluding the

possibility of union between Britain and France. Most obviously there are deep differences between the temper of political life in France and Britain, and, even if France returns to some sort of parliamentary democracy closely resembling the British system in its institutional arrangements, the differences which have always distinguished the French from the British idea of democracy will presumably remain.<sup>1</sup> Those divergencies in historical tradition and intellectual approach which make it difficult for any two countries to submit themselves to common institutions are particularly marked in the case of Britain and France.

There is another and even more important reason why the acceptance of the Churchill Offer would be unlikely, and why therefore its revival might lead to controversy which would be prejudicial to Franco-British understanding. France, after the experience of occupation, is inclined to assert, not to dissipate, her national identity. She will wish to use the capacity for independent action of which she has for so long been deprived. The restoration of a strong France, under a Government which makes French interests its first concern, is a primary interest of Britain, and Britain could not therefore contemplate any action which might seem to be inconsistent with the desire of the French people to play an independent part in international politics.

<sup>1</sup> The future constitution of France will not be settled until a Constituent Assembly has been elected. In the meantime, a popular basis for the Provisional Government's authority is provided by the Consultative Assembly, although in theory the Government is not responsible to that body. It is still much too early to make assumptions about the probable line of constitutional development. As has been noted elsewhere in this Report (Chapter IV) there is a trend in French political thought, both of the Right and of the Left, in favour of a stronger executive. A great deal depends on how far this movement goes. To say this is not to question that France will be a democracy, but parliamentary government is only one kind of democracy. Against the decision which, since 1870, has prevailed in practice of liberal constitutionalism, inspired by the British and less often the American example, are ranged the Jacobin and Bonapartist traditions in French political life. To the Jacobin what matters is the direct assertion of the popular will and not the laborious process of discussion and consent, and Bonapartism can be described as a form of democracy by plebiscite. The further France moves towards either of these conceptions, the further she moves in the matter of general political outlook from Great Britain. This ought not to impair co-operation which ought to depend on other and more lasting considerations, but it will do so if the differences are not recognized in both countries. The fact that they exist and may well increase is, in itself, a sufficient argument against any attempts at political union.



From the British point of view, also, objections to a revival of the proposal of union with France are likely to remain very great in any visible future. It is only within comparatively recent years that the most numerous sections of the British public have come to regard with equanimity the acquisition of permanent and definite obligations towards certain continental Powers. Such obligations as have been contracted (e.g. the Anglo-Soviet Alliance) are strictly limited in point of time and purpose. It is not likely that the process of conversion to the idea of full participation in continental politics—far as it has gone—will continue so rapidly as in any foreseeable future to make union with any continental Power possible, involving as it would submission to a common authority in matters of foreign policy and defence.

A still more serious objection to the proposal of union is that it has now been superseded by wider schemes of international co-operation, such as those which, framed on the highest authority, have put forward clearly-stated plans for a world organization (Chapter I). The revival of the Churchill Offer would obscure a fact fundamental to the whole discussion of post-war problems, namely, that western Europe must be considered as a whole. There could be no profit to be derived from an attempt to isolate Franco-British co-operation from the general context of western European security. The Franco-British *bloc* cannot of itself form a complete political and military entity without the closest association with other Powers, and more particularly with other States in western Europe. The need for the closest co-operation between Britain and France within the framework of this wider relationship is evident, but the chances of getting such co-operation and keeping it over a long period will be substantially greater if no attempt is made to give it a precise legal expression which would impose serious limitations of sovereignty on both States.

#### WESTERN EUROPEAN SECURITY

While the general responsibility for keeping the peace in Europe must in the main fall on Britain, France, and Russia, it

is nevertheless true that in practice and from obvious convenience Britain and France fortified, it is to be hoped, by the support of the United States, must carry the main burden in the west. Thus, while the details of the settlement in the east are still uncertain it is possible for British and French opinion to concentrate on the task of organizing security in that part of the Continent where Franco-British influence can be most immediately effective.

#### MILITARY SECURITY

The immediate task, from the point of view of military security, is to construct a system strong enough not merely to repel aggression in the west but to intervene effectively in Germany, whenever it seems that that country threatens aggression anywhere. This implies not merely the closest co-operation between Britain and France but also the possibility of making use of the territories of neighbouring States for the general organization of defence, even before they have been invaded. The reversion to neutrality of the small Powers on the western seaboard of Europe would, in particular, seriously imperil the structure of security. Something wider than the Locarno system is necessary. Not only must the Powers composing the western regional system be ready to lend military assistance to each other in the event of any one of them being attacked but they must be willing to act together in support of their eastern allies, in resistance to any attempted aggression by Germany.

An example of what such a western European system would imply was given by Dr van Kleffens, the Netherlands Foreign Minister, in a speech made over the wireless on December 28th, 1943, when he spoke of: "A strong formation in the west with America, Canada, and other British Dominions as the arsenal and reservoir of world power, with England as the base, especially for air power, and the west of the European mainland—by which I mean the Netherlands, Belgium, and France—becoming a bridgehead." Dr van Kleffens assumed the willingness of the United States and the Dominions to participate in the

European Security system and this assumption has yet to be proved true. Nevertheless the necessity of such an organization would be increased rather than diminished by the withdrawal of America from Europe. The formation of such a group as Dr van Kleffens imagined and its extension to include many states which he did not mention is likely to be one of the principal objects of British policy after the war. The advantages of such a system for France are apparent when it is reflected how different the fate of that country might have been had not Belgian and Dutch neutrality prevented the use of those territories for the purpose of allied intervention against Germany in the first months of the present war.

This is essentially a proposal not of federation but of confederation. Dr van Kleffens strictly excluded the suggestions that co-operation should be accompanied by the abandonment of sovereign rights and sustained by common political institutions. Many persons who concern themselves with post-war problems have taken a more optimistic view of the chances of federation. Any federation of western Europe including Britain would be open from the British point of view to the same objections as have been raised to the project of union with France. One recurring proposal put forward as an alternative to Franco-British union, is for a federation to comprise France, Holland, and Belgium. Such a proposal would not be open from the French side to the same objections as those to which the proposal for federation with Britain is susceptible, since in this case France would be the strongest partner in the combination, but for that reason among others it would almost certainly be unacceptable to Holland and Belgium. A third possible alignment, namely, between Britain, Holland, and Belgium, with France excluded, could not be considered by Britain for reasons which it has been the whole purpose of this Report to elucidate.

If federation in its complete form is excluded, some kind of machinery of collaboration in which Britain and France can participate with other Powers in western Europe must clearly be established. Such collaboration is not an end in itself but a necessary part of the general organization of Europe and the

world. In the waging of war the activities and resources of the western Powers have been combined to a very considerable extent. Such co-operation must be preserved and improved on. Joint air and naval bases and the development of common organs of decision and action in the spheres of military co-operation and economic planning might result in a high degree of co-ordination which could be accomplished without injuring national susceptibilities.

One of the most important conditions for the success of such a policy is the removal of the fear, still widespread on the Continent, that Britain may be prevented from taking an active part in European politics by too much concern for the preservation of close relations with the United States and the maintenance of our connections with the Dominions. If it comes to the point of establishing priorities Britain's first duty is to herself. This principle has for long been accepted and even proclaimed by the Commonwealth countries which do not hesitate to claim the same right for themselves. Britain's defence is bound up indissolubly with that of the western seaboard of Europe and with the need for preserving Europe as a whole from domination, from whatever quarter the threat may come. Our interests and commitments to Europe are therefore independent of our obligations to the Dominions and will be carried out whether or not the Dominions volunteer their support. Our European commitments are not however exclusive of our obligations as a member of the Commonwealth, for when our own security, which is the security of Europe, is provided for there remains a surplus of strength to be employed elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND THE GERMAN QUESTION

A Chatham House Study Group has already published a report on the problem of Germany<sup>2</sup> and the question will be considered here only in the light of Britain's relations with France.

<sup>1</sup> For the other side of this problem see Chapter IV—Section 2, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *The Problem of Germany* London: R.I.I.A. New York, Toronto, Bombay, Melbourne, Cape Town: Oxford University Press. 1943.

PAST DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BRITAIN AND FRANCE ON THE  
GERMAN QUESTION

The differences which in the inter-war period divided Britain from France almost all derived from the fact that whereas France desired a closely-defined system of security aimed explicitly against German aggression, Britain favoured a much wider and much less definite system into which, at the earliest opportunity, Germany should be admitted. There were, of course, many other clashes of opinion but they can almost all be traced to this source. France did not feel that any European security system which lacked British support would be capable of checking a resurgent Germany and she therefore determined, so long as such support was not sure, to do all she could to prevent the resurgence of Germany. A good illustration of how French claims against Germany were moderated in exact proportion as Britain's willingness to participate in a European security system increased is the negotiation at Paris in 1919 concerning the French claim for military security on the Rhine. This claim was abandoned on condition that America and Britain should guarantee the eastern frontiers of France. In point of fact, the guarantee was never given since America withdrew from it and Britain did not consider herself bound (as indeed from the strictly legal point of view she was not) to perform her share of the bargain except on condition that America performed hers. But the point to be observed is that France was willing to abandon her claim in return for a military guarantee. Had Britain been willing to give her full backing to France's schemes for European security, is it fair to suppose that France would have been willing, in return, to make substantial concessions to Britain's desire to see the economic recovery of Germany and her eventual restoration to a status of equality with other Powers.

This specific difference between the French and British outlooks is unlikely to recur. The last Article of the Atlantic Charter links up the problems of peace with the vanquished Powers with the wider problem of general security. Its terms are indeed vague but the terms of the Anglo-Soviet Alliance are not, and that instrument pledges this country and the Soviet Union to

go to each other's aid immediately in the event of any act of aggression against either of them by Germany or her allies. The conclusion by France of a largely similar pact with Russia<sup>1</sup> has greatly helped towards the creation of the nucleus of a European security system. If, as is believed, a similar pact is made between Britain and France, putting the old Entente on a solid and definite legal footing, and these two instruments are associated, the essentials of European security will be present. If Britain does not disappoint the hopes which France places in her by again trying to adopt a detached attitude towards European politics, if she accepts all the implications of her position as a European Power and if she continues to show herself alive to the dangers of German aggression, French opinion may well be more sympathetic than in the past to the view that the economic recovery of Germany is in the long run a continental interest.

Bearing this difference between the French and British outlooks in mind it may be well to consider briefly some of the main questions which will have to be faced in deciding the terms of peace for Germany.

#### DISARMAMENT

The total disarmament of Germany must involve a considerable external control of her economic life. The crux of the German problem is that a population of some sixty millions with an apparently permanent tendency to aggression and situated in the centre of Europe commands vast industrial resources which enable her to build up great military power. Experience has shown that mere inspection of German industry is not enough to ensure that it will be used only for peaceful purposes. The dismantling of a large part of that industry would, on the other hand, mean vast unemployment and would create exactly those conditions of popular discontent which have been shown to favour the revival of militarism. The two chief centres of industrial activity in Germany are the Rhineland, the Ruhr, and the Saar in the west and the Silesian coalfields in the east. By

<sup>1</sup> For differences in the terms of the Anglo-Soviet and Franco-Soviet Treaties and their possible implications, see Postscript to this Report.

ary forces, agreed with British and American opinion that German territorial unity could not be called in question; but conscious of the fact that in that case there were "twenty million Germans too many" he succeeded in getting Allied agreement to the occupation of the Rhineland. The French policy of supporting Rhenish separatism found passing expression, however, in the abortive scheme for incorporating an independent Rhenish Republic (or Republics) in a western security system. There were also abortive French attempts to stimulate the desire in Bavaria and Baden to be "rid of Berlin." In recent years, French opinion as to the feasibility of "dissociating" different parts of Germany and at least establishing a separate Rhineland has become stronger; and British and American opinion regarding the territorial unity of the Reich is much less rigid than in 1919. Assuming effective Allied possession of all the bigger "controls" and communications of the Reich, it would appear to many that European security will be better guaranteed by the gradual recovery of political health and vitality of separate German States, conceivably associated in a loose federation whose overriding decisions would however be subject to Allied control—than by the maintenance of an impotent undifferentiated Germanic mass, whose unity was guaranteed by the United Nations but was at the same time their chief bugbear, since, feeding on the isolation imposed on it, it would be bound by its very mass to recover a considerable amount of power and be in a position to play the eastern and western Powers off against one another when their vigilance has relaxed. Such a policy of "dissociation" or even dismemberment is not the same as a policy of truncation. The truncation of parts of eastern or western Germany and their incorporation in the territories, e.g., of Poland and France would not necessarily weaken the cohesion and unity of the rest of Germany, if these are maintained by Allied controls. In any case, whatever may be said for the desirability for reasons of security or general policy of the transfer of East Prussia to Poland, there is no indication of a French desire to incorporate any substantial part of German territory in the French State—a policy which failed under Napoleon and has not since been

revived. The same cannot be said of the association of a Rheno-Westphalian unit or units in a western group, since this would permit at the same time direct control of the main German arsenal of war. Many who support such a policy would welcome the desire of other parts of Germany to achieve at least some degree of substantial independence *vis-à-vis* a centralized Government which has involved them in such untold disaster. Such a normal reaction might be discouraged by any Allied attempt artificially to carve up the Reich; but those who favour the destruction of the unitary German State argue that there is more prospect of the recovery of European stability if the centrifugal tendencies are encouraged at a time when the large controls—economic and military—are exclusively in Allied hands, since smaller German units can provide more satisfactory conditions for the return of political sanity and responsibility than some scheme of re-education imposed by the occupying Powers. Such developments are not incompatible with the establishment of a United Nations base or bases on German territory, which would be more likely to be favoured here than the project of exclusively French bases.

#### THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE REICH

The group of French experts who discussed the Chatham House pamphlet *The Problem of Germany* with some of its English authors, laid special stress however on the dangers of trying to determine from outside the political structure of Germany.<sup>1</sup> They argued that no change of régime in Germany would be a sufficient guarantee to make possible the relaxation of restraints on German re-armament and the German economy. On the other hand, if such restraints were made effective no régime in Germany would be capable of threatening European peace. Thus it was maintained that attention ought to be concentrated chiefly on security measures, especially as any interference in German domestic politics would be certain to destroy in German eyes the reputation of whatever group it was intended to benefit. There is an even stronger argument against

<sup>1</sup> *International Affairs*, Vol XX, No. 2, April 1944, p 243.



attempts to prescribe the political future of the Reich from outside. The first condition of a satisfactory policy towards Germany is that it should command the sustained and united support of the Allies and particularly of Britain and Russia, on whose continued and increasing co-operation the prospect of preventing German aggression principally depends. So long as the Allies confine themselves to measures directed mainly towards keeping Germany in a state of military powerlessness the obvious community of interest by which in this respect they are bound, will probably be enough to offset all minor differences which may arise between them. Should they extend their objectives to include the reform in detail of German institutions, the need for agreeing on the kind of reform which is desirable might well place an intolerable strain on their capacity for mutual understanding. Britain and Russia are both committed to the destruction of Nazism and so far as this means punishment of war criminals and the removal from the German Civil Service of persons who have played a conspicuous part in the government of Germany during the last ten years or who are known to be plotting the restoration of the Nazi régime, the task is imperative, if only on grounds of security and in the interests of protecting the Allied armies of occupation. But it must never be forgotten that the relationship of Britain with Russia which, from the point of view of military security in Europe, matters more than the relationship of Britain with America, differs from that relationship in one important respect, namely, that it rests almost exclusively on community of strategic interest and not at all, except in the negative sense that both Powers oppose the Nazis, on community of political ideals. On the recognition of this fact and of the limitations which it imposes will largely depend the success with which Britain and Russia can devise and maintain a common policy towards Germany. It is here that their strategic interests are most conspicuously the same, and it is here that their differences of political outlook have the gravest potentialities of discord. If Germany is not to become a bone of contention between the Allies, a contingency that could benefit only the forces of aggression inside Germany, the

Allies must confine themselves to doing to her such things as they can do without abandoning or compromising their distinctive principles of politics.

The political structure of Germany is a matter of perhaps less importance to the Allies than its social structure, and here French and British opinion is likely to agree on the need for destroying the power of those social classes which have been traditionally associated with German aggressiveness. It cannot be assumed that the German people themselves will revolt against the hegemony of these classes and obvious intervention from outside might well provoke a reaction in favour of them. Fortunately, however, measures which are chiefly intended for security may operate incidentally to produce the desired social results. The control of German heavy industry, for example, would have the incidental effect of diminishing the political power of the big industrialists, while the surrender of East Prussia would have the same effect on the Junkers.

#### REPARATIONS

There is no need to stress here the political importance to Anglo-French relations of the problem of reparations. That problem must be considered, however, primarily from the economic point of view and in the light of general plans of economic reconstruction. Discussion of its implications must therefore be postponed until Chapter VI.

#### 4. ANGLO-FRENCH INTERESTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

An area demanding special attention as one where French and British interests converge is the Mediterranean. It is unnecessary to emphasize the importance to Britain of the Middle Sea as a highway to the Indian Ocean in time of peace, and as the most rapid route by which to reinforce and defend British political, strategic, and economic interests in the Near East and the Indian Ocean in time of danger. But the Mediterranean is also the area where the interests of Britain as a world Power and as a European Power most clearly meet; and it is of vital importance for her to ensure that no major part of the eastern

Mediterranean area should be incorporated in any political system which may become hostile to her and that her sea-communications are maintained with her Allies in south-eastern Europe and more particularly with Russia. If the eastern and western sides of any European security system are to be kept effectively united, it is essential that the Mediterranean should be kept open.

For France the importance of the Mediterranean is even more evident, for some of the most valuable parts of her Empire lie on its southern shores. The importance of the North African Empire and its limitations as a source of man-power have been noted in a previous chapter; it need only be added that in recent years the French have been increasingly preoccupied with the need for defending their lines of mobilization across the Mediterranean. It was from French North Africa that the most "resisting" elements of M. Reynaud's last Cabinet conceived that the fight should be continued when Marshal Pétain was calling for an Armistice in June 1940; and it seems more than probable that the role played by French North Africa and its forces (led by French officers and N.C.O.s) in the liberation of France will further strengthen the bonds which join it to the Metropolis. Moreover, French economic policy generally counts on the further reinforcement of the economic links which bind French North (as also French West) Africa to the Mother Country.

French interests in the eastern Mediterranean, though less vital and often less tangible than those in the western basin, are nevertheless important. The long tradition of French cultural activities in Turkey, Syria, and Egypt, reinforced by the traditional claim to be the protector of the Latin and Uniate Christian communities, is regarded as a major political asset, which must be preserved. France has a vital economic interest in the oil of Iraq, and many large investments in Egypt and Syria, of which the Suez Canal Concession is the chief. The Suez Canal (which was, it should be recalled, a product of French creative enterprise) is important to France also for her imperial communications with Madagascar and the Far East. On the other

hand the Mandates she has held in this area since the last war have proved in many ways a disappointment. If France's position in the States of the Levant was a factor in the eventual negotiation of the Anglo-Franco-Turkish alliance of 1939, the events of 1940 showed how precarious was her apparently strong strategic position there. That position provided her with an opportunity for reinforcing French prestige in the eastern Mediterranean and of controlling, or at least influencing, the development of Arab national aspirations at their source. But events have not shown that the French find it easy to reconcile the two lines of policy involved; and this is the more explicable because they generally tend to regard the growth of pan-Arab consciousness as a direct threat to their North African Empire.

The community of French and British interests in the inter-war period was nowhere so great as in the Mediterranean. The Entente of 1904 arose out of an agreement by which France recognized Britain's special position in Egypt in return for Britain's recognition of Morocco as a sphere of French influence. This initial arrangement determined the main lines of Anglo-French co-operation in the Mediterranean for the next thirty years, in spite of local rivalries and misunderstandings in the Levant. In the eastern Mediterranean the initiative was to an increasing extent taken by Britain while France concentrated mainly on the western Mediterranean. She was thus able to give undivided attention to the occupation and pacification of Morocco, the building up of naval bases at Bizerta and Mers-el-Kébir, and the linking up of her North African with her West African possessions.

Nevertheless, the harmony of Anglo-French relations in the Mediterranean has sometimes been endangered by the divergence of British and French policies towards the Arabs. British policy has come to favour the aspirations of the Arab peoples towards independence and expressed support for the ideals of Arab Federation. France, which like Britain is a "Moslem Power," has in the past favoured a less liberal policy and fears the repercussions which British policy may produce in North-

West Africa, in view of the growing strength of Arab nationalist movements in all three territories since 1919, and has consistently repressed all Arab or Moslem agitation. However, except in Tunisia, where Arab nationalism is strong and well-organized, the danger is probably exaggerated. In Algeria the material weakness and inner disunity of both Arabs and Kabyles and in Morocco—where a certain tradition of “indirect rule” still survives since the days of Lyautey—the inexperience of the Arab intelligentsia and their lack of support amongst the Berber cultivators and mountain tribes, are likely to hinder the development of strong separatist parties for many years. At the same time, much would appear to depend on the extent to which grievances are remedied and the more liberal policy inaugurated by recent measures of the French Provisional Government is followed up in the future.

It is often overlooked that one of the essential elements of British policy in the Mediterranean is that its southern shores should be in friendly hands. Britain has thus a very direct interest in the stability and well-being of French North Africa. It is obvious furthermore that her Arab policy can involve no obligations or undertakings in respect of the inhabitants of those territories. On the other hand, the British Government have underwritten the promise of independence given to Syria and Lebanon by the leaders of the Free French, and stand committed to ensuring, to the best of their ability, that the French Mandates over Syria and Lebanon shall be formally abandoned after the liberation of France. At the same time Britain is committed to recognizing the predominant position of France in that area over any other European power. Britain clearly has no ambitions in the Levant and the French have promised to establish the independence of the Levant States, and hope, after this has been done, to negotiate treaties with them, such as Britain herself made with Iraq when she surrendered her Mandate there in 1930. Thus the chances of Anglo-French agreement in the eastern Mediterranean seem good and could only be reduced by determined opposition on the part of France to Britain's Arab policy, or on the part of Britain to France's privileged position

in the Levant, which was clearly recognized when France gave independence to Syria and Lebanon.

The problem of the Black Sea Straits is often regarded as one in which British and French interests on the one side are opposed to the interests of Russia on the other. This view is a legacy from the nineteenth century, when French and British policy, based upon fear of Russian expansion into the Balkans, alternated between supporting Turkey and encouraging the establishment of independent Balkan States. On both sides the special interests in the Straits have been defensive: that of Russia, that the balance of naval power in the Black Sea shall not be upset by the ingress of foreign warships; that of Britain, and less directly of France (since France's more vital interests lie in the western Mediterranean), that the balance of naval power in the Mediterranean shall not be upset by the egress of warships from the Black Sea. But the course of this war, as of the last, has driven home the lesson that the greatest interest of Britain and France in this region is a mutual one, namely, that control of the Balkans and the Straits shall not fall into the hands of a common enemy. As long as Anglo-Russian relations continue to be conducted in the spirit of the Alliance and of the Moscow Declaration, and as long as the Franco-Soviet pact holds good<sup>1</sup> the interests of Britain and France will lie in maintaining the closest relations with Turkey and the Balkan States, and in encouraging them, in their own interests as well as the general interest of Europe, to enter into the widest possible co-operation with Russia.

Anglo-French relations in the Mediterranean are necessarily influenced by the relations of both countries with Italy and Spain. France's relations with her principal "Latin sisters" have not always been as cordial as the formula and affinities of race and religion may have seemed to promise. They have been complicated by the alternation—peculiarly violent in Latin and Catholic countries—between clerical and anti-clerical, reactionary and revolutionary, "Right" and "Left" internal policies and opinion. Those elements of French opinion which have had

<sup>1</sup> See Postscript.

most admiration for (Fascist) Italy in recent years are not likely to be of much importance after the war. Whether a grouping of the Latin democracies under French leadership and on an anti-Fascist basis, as proposed by Count Sforza, can constitute a strong and effective factor in the post-war world is a matter of speculation, though the assumption that France must perforce "choose between" a Latin *bloc* (whatever its complexion) and close association with Great Britain and the Anglo-Saxon democratic world as a whole, seems unnecessary. Successful co-operation between the Latin—as between other countries—is bound to be determined in no small measure by the extent to which their material interests and long-term policies coincide, though these themselves may be affected by a common approach. Thus in French North Africa alone the presence of a substantial Italian element in Tunisia and an important Spanish element in Oran can, according to opinion and circumstances, be viewed as a link between the Latin countries or as a bone of contention.

The French have not felt much regard for the Italians as a military race since the last war; and the "stab in the back" of June 1940 will not readily be forgotten. But the boot is now on the other leg. The claims of Fascist Italy to "Corsica, Nice, Tunis" have by now become a curiosity. French policy in Tunisia since the liberation in 1943 has sought to remove Italian privileges and counter Italian influences, while not otherwise interfering with the large Italian population, mainly of the working class, who play an essential part in the economic life of the Regency.<sup>1</sup> The claims put forward by General de Gaulle in January 1943 to a protectorate over the Moslem populations of the Fezzan in South Libya raises the question of the disposal of the Italian Empire and of the relative preponderance of France in the eastern as compared with the western Mediterranean.

As regards Spain, her moral complicity under General Franco with the Fascist and Nazi régimes makes her an object of suspicion to France and the other Western democracies. It is con-

<sup>1</sup> The diplomatic implications of this policy were made clear when in January, 1945 the French Provisional Government denounced the Conventions of 1896. On this basis they have now established diplomatic relations with Signor Bonomi's Government.

ceivable that a strong swing to the "Left" in France will have effects on the internal situation in post-war Spain. But national interests inside the field of Mediterranean relations are connected with the future of Tangier and the Spanish Zone of Morocco. While there would seem to be no question of Spain's being ousted from Spanish Morocco, Britain and France will almost certainly be in agreement in demanding the restoration of an international régime in Tangier—abolished by arbitrary Spanish action in 1941. Future developments in the Spanish Zone will certainly be watched with a jealous eye by France, in view of the threats to the security and stability of the French Protectorate in Morocco which have emanated from it on more than one occasion during the war, and cannot be disregarded by Britain in view of the strategic position of the Spanish Zone on the southern shores of the Straits of Gibraltar.

To sum up: The Mediterranean constitutes one of the most important areas of Anglo-French co-operation, and one in which the particular interests of the two countries of the Entente and their general responsibilities for European and world security will continue to coincide in all essentials. A division of functions is therefore indicated by which a restored France continues to have chief responsibility for the defence of the western basin while Britain takes chief responsibility in the eastern basin. Britain cannot be expected to alter in its fundamentals a considered policy of support for Arab aspirations in the Near and Middle East; but British opinion has certainly never conceived that such a policy could be pursued to a point where it threatened vital French interests and jeopardized the Entente. Signs of French readiness to take a more positive view of British aims and the development of a more liberal native policy in the French North African Empire have been noted and point to the prospect of more cordial co-operation further east, involving as it does British recognition of France's privileged position there and the loyalty of the French to their repeated pledges regarding the independence of the States of the Levant. In the eastern Mediterranean Britain and France have a common interest in securing the maximum co-operation of the Balkan



States and Turkey with themselves and with Russia for the satisfaction of their defence requirements. In the western Mediterranean they have a common interest in assuring that the security of the sea-routes and the stability of North West Africa shall not again be endangered from Italy and Spain. It is to be hoped that these two countries, freed from German tutelage and domination, will freely find their place inside a Mediterranean system of which recent history shows that Britain and France must be the chief architects and guarantors.

### 5. IMPERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

One vitally important aspect of Anglo-French relations falls outside the scope of this Report which time and the limitations of its authors have confined to Europe. Great Britain and France are the two greatest imperial Powers in the world. This fact has not, in the past, influenced their respective colonial policies as might have been expected chiefly because in French eyes the interests of the French Colonial Empire have been so closely associated with those of Metropolitan France as to make it impossible and undesirable to distinguish between them. To-day, a greater consciousness of empire in France and a concurrent tendency towards devolution in imperial administration are narrowing the gulf between British and French conceptions of empire.

Co-operation in this sphere may be expected to take two distinct forms. First, by virtue of their primacy among the imperial Powers, Great Britain and France are the natural guardians and upholders of the doctrine and institutions of empire at a time when the imperial idea is being widely challenged and increasingly discredited. Secondly, the proximity of many British and French colonial possessions and the similarity of the problems which they present give ample scope for co-operation in matters of administration. If Lord Hailey's conception of a system of Regional Councils on which the imperial Powers in any given area would be represented is realized, Great Britain and France may hope to derive mutual advantage from a permanent exchange of information and criticism, particularly in relation to colonial affairs in Africa.

## Chapter VI

# ANGLO-FRENCH ECONOMIC RELATIONS

### INTRODUCTION

A survey of the economic aspects of Anglo-French relations may require some preliminary adjustment of perspectives. It does not follow from the interdependence of political and economic factors that economic integration is the natural corollary of political accord, or that trade between Britain and France should necessarily be increased to the maximum in order to back an alliance desirable on other grounds. Mutual economic interests and commercial contacts are, *ceteris paribus*, all to the good, but any attempt to isolate Anglo-French economic problems and not continually refer to the general framework within which they appear would be disastrous. Although the later stages of the war and the early post-war period are likely to see a number of such problems which may properly be regarded as the concern of these two countries alone, the wider issues of commercial policy or long-term reconstruction projects must always be considered in the light of other nations' aims and principles. No agreement, however far-reaching, between Britain and France alone could solve the difficulties which will confront them in the post-war world, and one problem in particular—that of the balance of payments—will be so vital for Great Britain that other considerations must necessarily be subordinated to its solution, and suggestions for the furtherance of Anglo-French economic relations fitted in with international or regional arrangements capable of fulfilling this first requirement. Until the discussions between the Powers on the subject, e.g. of international currency organization, long-term investment plans, and commercial principles have reached a certain stage of crystallization, it is impossible to say with any precision either what the problems of Britain and France will be or what devices will be available for their solution.

It is obvious, however, that questions of Anglo-French trade

and mutual economic interest will be one set of factors relevant to the general discussion. Taken merely as a relatively small item in the balance of payments, Anglo-French trade would seem of minor importance, and it must be noted that for neither country is the exchange of goods and services with the other of outstanding importance in the total foreign exchange, or of the same significance as the trade with certain other industrial countries. Nevertheless there is one aspect of the debate on post-war trading relations in which the Anglo-French issue may well be decisive. The feasibility of some regional arrangement, based on a western European economic grouping, may depend on the willingness of Britain and France, with their respective empires, to form the core of such an economic group, and this is the crucial problem of Anglo-French economic relations. An outline of the subject will be given later in this section of the report, after a brief discussion of other questions which, while less far-reaching, will affect the climate of Anglo-French opinion.

A strict watch must be kept on the sterling-franc exchange rate, and this question is complicated by the impossibility of divorcing it from that of the post-war exchanges. Overvaluation would be disastrous at a later date when there will be difficulties enough for the convalescent French export trade, and progressive devaluations may not be compatible with that confidence in the franc which would seem from the politico-psychological case history of pre-war France to be a matter of importance. A state of inflation in France relative to the price levels of other countries would of course aggravate the problem, but while this must if possible be avoided, any attempt to adjust the purchasing power parity of the franc by depressing the internal price level would involve a socially unjustifiable transfer of real income to the rentier class holding the large volume of outstanding debt.

The internal economic organization of France is naturally the responsibility of the new French civil authorities, but in so far as British help is welcomed over administrative problems, such as rationing and price control, they should be assisted in every

way and British experience made available wherever possible.<sup>1</sup> The advice of British economists and statesmen—frequently critical, like many Frenchmen, of the French financial system—may not be welcomed at a later stage and it may be that the most useful contribution to the financial stability of France will be practical assistance in the early stages, e.g. in the prevention of a runaway inflation. Many problems of this kind will arise in the Relief period, and the internal distribution of goods obtained from abroad to fill immediate needs will itself present serious difficulties. In the interests of financial stability, purchasing power should wherever possible be absorbed *pari passu* with the increasing supply of goods, but fair distribution between the richer and poorer sections of the community can only be secured if part of this supply is withheld from the market and distributed either without payment or at reduced prices through relief or charity organizations. The more long term problem—that of the conversion and re-equipment of French industry—is usually distinguished as belonging to the Reconstruction phase. Some supplies necessary for the reorganization of essential transport and public utility services are considered as within the scope of relief and rehabilitation and may possibly be furnished under extended Lend-Lease arrangements, but the main work of rebuilding the French economy will require capital obtained from one of three sources—internally (at the expense of home consumption), through reparation arrangements, or by international investment. The last two will be considered in subsequent paragraphs.

#### REPARATIONS

No degree of accuracy can be guaranteed for any estimate of the damage suffered, directly and indirectly, by the French industrial and agricultural system as a result of German aggres-

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that the problems of rationing are different and, in some respects, more intractable in France than in this country—being similar rather to those of the United States. Direct control is a very much less simple affair when a high proportion of the total food supplies comes from small producers at home, and where there is lacking the limited number of "turnstile" entrances provided by the major British ports.

sion. Moreover, the tale of physical destruction, deterioration of equipment, and outright pillage could be duplicated by other occupied countries, and an attempt to present a total account might produce figures beside which the £6,600,000,000 fixed by the Reparations Commission after the last war would seem relatively small. The unhappy history of that effort to obtain immense sums from Germany—culminating after severe strain between the Allies in negotiations designed, in the words of an Italian spokesman in the years after the last war “to divide our disappointments”—suggests that the question of what could be obtained is of more practical importance than that of what should in strict justice be paid. -

The memory of friction between Britain and France in the nineteen twenties over the matter of reparations makes an amicable and orderly solution of the problem of great importance for the future economic relations of the two countries, but overall planning is a prerequisite of such a solution, and the value of goods and services actually received may be determined by the degree of direct planning undertaken in this sphere. The position will be better this time in so far as a complicated structure of inter-Allied debt will have been avoided by Lend-Lease or other arrangements, but efforts to exact payment equivalent to the damage sustained would involve the victorious nations in a transfer problem of even greater magnitude than before. It is essential that stress should be laid on payment in goods and services rather than in money if only because this focuses attention on the basic problem, and special arrangements for the delivery of goods outside the channels of the normal competitive export trades may be more successful than attempts to secure for Germany an export surplus of such a size that foreign currency will be available for reparation payments. The surplus of goods must of course be made available by the restriction of consumption in the ex-enemy countries to some reasonably low level, but arrangements must also be made to secure the acceptability of the goods or services released in this way, and the experience of the early nineteen-twenties, when German offers of labour and materials for the rebuilding of the devastated areas were rejected

by the French from fear of competition against home labour and industry, and from a natural aversion to the presence of Germans on French soil, may be noted as a warning of what might happen again. The question of sending German workers to repair the damage inflicted abroad is complex, and unlikely to be decided on purely economic grounds, but in so far as objections to this course come from a fear of consequent unemployment in the creditor countries the problem is similar to that of the acceptability of goods, and similarly dependent on the success of their employment policies. Given a situation in which full employment will be successfully maintained over a period, the expansionist outlook engendered will result in a much greater willingness to take goods as reparations settlement. If the capitalist countries fail to achieve this the situation may well be as forecast by the Soviet economist Professor Varga, i.e. the U.S.S.R., eagerly accepting German labour and equipment, may obtain the lion's share of such real payment as is affected.

Even with full employment there may, in so far as similar industries will have been developed by the belligerents on both sides, be some difficulty over the type of goods to be transferred to Britain. There would certainly be an outcry if it were thought that an influx of German goods was aggravating conversion difficulties and increasing structural unemployment in this country. It should be possible, given the extremely urgent need for machinery and other products to which war industries can be converted, to divert the main stream of certain types of engineering products to the markets of central and south-eastern Europe or perhaps even further afield. It may always be argued that in acquiescing in this arrangement Britain will be renouncing valuable, and to some extent self-perpetuating export markets, but it must be remembered that without foregoing part at least of the rise in real income levels which will be expected after the war Britain will not be in a position to supply capital goods in sufficient quantities to countries unable to pay in foreign exchange, even assuming she could produce all the types of equipment in which Germany specialized before the war.

Apart from the possibility referred to above of the direct repair of devastated areas, there will be an obvious need in France for many of the products of German industry. France's requirements in respect of machine tools and other forms of industrial equipment will be, for a time, practically insatiable, and it is worth noting both that the standard of capital equipment was by no means satisfactory when the war began, and that France was always largely dependent on imports of this type of goods.

The fundamental point applying to both Britain and France alike is that the fear of structural unemployment in the immediate post-war period which may be stressed by special industrial interests must not be allowed to obscure the fact that a scarcity of goods will be holding down income levels. If there is a danger of general unemployment at a later date when reparation payments are still in force, the remedy must be found in monetary or investment policies and full use still made of the goods which can be turned out in German factories and credited to the Allies on reparation account.

#### POST-WAR TRADE

A full discussion of the commercial interests of the two countries would require as a background detailed figures, showing the direction and composition of their pre-war trade, and the development of the internal economies of Britain and France in relation to general world trends—a survey which cannot be given here. But there is also the question of employment policy which no discussion of post-war commercial relations can ignore. It should be noted that in the past Britain had an unemployment problem of far greater magnitude than that of France. Although activity in the latter country remained at a distressingly low level throughout the nineteen-thirties, unemployment never rose to anything like the highest percentage for Great Britain. Owing to a decrease in the working population—due among other things to the repatriation of foreign workers—there was no general reserve of labour through which (given the necessary employment policy) a substantial increase in the national income could have been achieved. In Britain full em-

ployment policy will probably be the central feature of the post-war economic pattern, into which commercial policy must be fitted, and the maintenance of a high level of activity will in itself alter the balance of payments position considerably. The problem is unlikely to face France with the same urgency, and it may also be worth noting that the Keynesian analysis of the factors determining the level of employment, now so widely accepted in England had, up to the outbreak of war, received surprisingly little attention in France.

### THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS—PRE-WAR POSITION

The structure of the balance of payments of Great Britain and France was similar in that both offset a deficit on commodity trade by a surplus on invisible items (shipping income, tourist receipts, income on foreign investments, etc.). In 1938 France paid in goods for some 62 per cent of her merchandise imports, and covered practically the whole deficit by the favourable balance on the invisible trade account. Great Britain on the other hand, covering slightly less of her merchandise imports by commodity transactions (58 per cent) offset only another 35 per cent by gains on invisible items and the remainder by net foreign disinvestment. The relative importance of the various items in the invisible balance was somewhat different. Shipping income accounted for about one-third of the net credit balance in each case, but income from foreign securities played a rather larger part and income from financial services was of much greater importance in the British balance. The French on the other hand obtained a considerable part of their credit balance from the expenditure of foreign tourists which accounted for one-fifth of the total.

The composition of the commodity trade of each country was as follows for 1937:

#### FRANCE

(Figures converted to approximate value in £ million at average 1937 exchange rate of £1 = 124.4 frs. Values in million frs. shown underneath.)

	Foodstuffs	Industrial Raw Materials	Manufactured Articles	Total
IMPORTS.	£86.31 (c.25%) 10,737.6 frs.	£202.39 (c.60%) 25,177.5 frs.	£52.06 (c.15%) 6,476.8 frs.	£340.76 (100%) 42,390.9 frs.
EXPORTS	£27.12 (c.14%) 3,373.7 frs.	£67.74 (c.35%) 8,427.7 frs.	£97.56 (c.51%) 12,137.3 frs.	£192.42 (100%) 23,938.7 frs.



GREAT BRITAIN  
(million pounds)

	<i>Foodstuffs</i>	<i>Industrial Raw Materials</i>	<i>Manufactured Articles</i>	<i>Total</i>
IMPORTS:	401·6 (c.42%)	359·7 (c.38%)	192·6 (c.20%)	953·9 (100%)
EXPORTS:	33·7 (c.6%)	133·8 (c.26%)	354·1 (c.68%)	521·6 (100%)

These figures show the greater degree of self-sufficiency in foodstuffs achieved by France,<sup>1</sup> but it would be a mistake to assume that the high degree of autarky advocated by some spokesmen was actually achieved in the past. France was dependent on foreign countries for part at least of her supplies of practically every important industrial raw material, with the exception of iron ore and bauxite, and industrial development during the inter-war period had resulted in a change in the composition of her imports in favour of raw materials and semi-manufactured products and at the expense of finished industrial goods. Considerable quantities of coal had to be imported and this must continue, even allowing for the development of hydro-electric power as a substitute. It seems, therefore, that although external trade plays a far smaller part in the French than in the British economy, the former is likewise vitally interested in arrangements to ease the flow of goods across national frontiers.

One point of cardinal importance in determining the commercial interests of each of the two countries is the composition of their exports considered from the point of view of the factors influencing foreign demand. Britain, exporting mainly manufactured goods was (in spite of the considerable proportion of these exports going to other industrial countries) dependent above all on the level of prosperity of the primary producing countries. France, although exporting large quantities of bauxite, some iron ore and a fairly high proportion of agricultural goods (12-14 per cent of total exports), depended for much of

<sup>1</sup> The fact that France imported only 2·3 per cent of her wheat compared with the 76·9 per cent imported by Great Britain, may be quoted as one example relating to a staple foodstuff.

her export trade on the sale of highly finished "luxury" goods to North America and to the other industrialized States of Europe—sales which were very sensitive to changes in the level of incomes in these countries.

#### ANGLO-FRENCH TRADE

The part played by mutual trade in the external economies of Britain and France is indicated by the following figures:

In 1938 France took 4.4 per cent of Britain's exports, coming seventh on a list of customers which included South Africa and Australia with over 7 per cent each and the United States with 5.4 per cent of the total. She supplied 2.6 per cent of Britain's imports, being tenth on a list headed by the United States with 12.8 of the total. Trade with Britain played a considerably larger part, however, in France's foreign transactions. This country was her second best European customer—taking 11.6 per cent of her exports (Belgium absorbed 13.7 per cent), and supplying 7 per cent of total French imports compared with 11.4 per cent obtained from the United States and 6.9 per cent from Belgium and Germany. These figures show a marked decline compared with those for 1929, when France took 4.3 per cent of Britain's exports and supplied 4.8 per cent of her imports, while Britain took 15.1 per cent of France's exports and supplied 10 per cent of her imports.<sup>1</sup> These figures show that the break-up of Anglo-French economic integration during the nineteen thirties diminished the importance of British trade in the French economy relative to that of French trade in the British total.

The main point about the composition of Anglo-French trade is the high proportion of luxury goods in the total of French exports to Britain, and the much higher proportion of raw materials (of which coal and coal products formed nearly 90 per cent) in the reverse movement of goods.

The problem of Britain's post-war balance of payments has

<sup>1</sup> Protectionist measures in both countries must be held largely responsible for this decline, particularly those affecting the important group of manufactures and foodstuffs classed as semi-luxuries, for which fairly close substitutes could be obtained elsewhere.

been widely discussed, and the basic features of the post-war situation have received general attention. France may well be faced with similar difficulties though it must be remembered that the same problem did not exist in the pre-war period and that it will never be of such outstanding importance in the French economy. France's export industries may suffer to an even greater extent than those of Great Britain, through destruction and the interruption of sales, and it may not be easy at first to secure that a sufficient part of France's industry is occupied on export work and later to place goods produced with equipment markedly inferior to that of some other countries. Nor will it be easy to secure large increases in invisible exports in order to fill the gap. Foreign security holdings were reduced by sales made between September 1939 and June 1940 and substantial German purchases of French interests in foreign companies will have complicated the structure of French foreign holdings, especially where these were eventually resold in the United States or Switzerland.<sup>1</sup>

Enough has been said to indicate that there are fundamental differences in the prospects facing the economics of Britain and France, but two points, of common interest should be noted:

- (a) Both are vitally dependent (to a much greater extent than, for instance, the United States) on foreign trade, and similarly interested in the establishment of conditions favourable to a high level of international exchange.
- (b) Both will be faced with the necessity of adapting the import/export sector of their economics to offset the deterioration in their international trading positions resulting from war-time disorganization and losses, and failing some comprehensive international arrangements to meet the difficulties of potential deficit countries they must maintain a considerable degree of control over certain factors affecting the balance of payments. Some arrangement is needed which will allow a breathing space during which deficit countries would not be required to find

<sup>1</sup> The question of restitution will of course arise, but this may not be easy where resale has been achieved.

foreign currency for their full volume of imports, and which would also secure that in the long run such countries could achieve a balance in their foreign payments at the optimum level of activity.

Three possibilities may be considered:

1. Britain and France may join in general international currency and investment schemes, such as those discussed at various times between experts of the United States, Great Britain, and other of the United Nations.

2. They may seek to minimize their dependence of foreign trade, moving towards an autarkic solution of the problem by developing the production of vital industrial materials and foodstuffs within their own borders and those of their overseas territories.

3. They might together organize a western European economic group and, with certain units of their colonial empires, form the nucleus of such an organization.

The first two alternatives cannot be discussed at length here, particularly as neither of them belong properly to the sphere of Anglo-French relations, but one or two points may be mentioned bringing out difficulties and disadvantages and thus indicating, by a process of elimination, that the third alternative is at least worth considering. While it is generally agreed that really effective and far-reaching measures on a fully international scale would be preferable to a regional solution of post-war trading difficulties, it is by no means certain that any of the schemes so far discussed at the official level can lay claim to this description. However this may be, it certainly cannot be said that a satisfactory international scheme is so safely "in the bag" that consideration of alternatives can be abandoned. The second autarkic alternative might well find more support in French circles than among British economists and statesmen, and strategic as well as economic arguments will be brought up in its favour, but those who accept this point of view must recognize the drawbacks of a solution which would relinquish the benefits derived from the international division of labour along a broad front. It is true that the trend in latter years has been in favour

of concentration of trade within both the British and French empires; Great Britain obtained 54 per cent of her total imports from the British Commonwealth in 1938 compared with 38 per cent ten years earlier, and France was supplied to the extent of 41 per cent by her overseas territories in the later year compared with 23 per cent in 1928. But a deliberate adjustment of production to maintain and increase this trend would meet with both political and physical difficulties. France's lack of resources for the supplying of her solid and liquid fuel requirements has already been noted, and the French Empire is similarly placed and likewise unable to make up the deficiencies of metropolitan France in respect of many important industrial raw materials. The production of metropolitan France and the French Empire together provided for only 3.5 per cent of France's cotton consumption, 4.5 per cent for that of wool, 15 per cent for rubber, 3 per cent for petrol, 1 per cent for copper, 2 per cent for manganese, 1 per cent for tin, and 6 per cent for silk, while for coal, wood, and pulp between 25 and 65 per cent were obtained from foreign countries.

Certain misleading ideas must be cleared out of the way before the third alternative—the formation of a western European economic group—can be discussed. It should be stated categorically that there is no suggestion of political federation between the members of such a group or (so called) *bloc*, and that the mutual economic arrangements could, if desired, be put into effect by the conclusion of agreements on specific points, valid for a reasonable period of time, rather than by the delegation of authority to a central economic organization. Moreover, that there would be no attempt to secure the complete self-sufficiency of the area concerned, or necessarily to unify tariffs within its boundaries, and that any regional arrangement which seemed to menace the political or economic interests of outside countries and led to the formation of other groups for the purposes of retaliation and rivalry rather than economic integration, would be *ipso facto* condemned. It would be essential at the outset to convince third parties of the non-aggressive character of the organization, and to make it clear that membership, or associa-

tion in the projects of the group, would be open to any country willing to subscribe effectively to certain principles of commerce and employment policy.

Proposals for a western European economic group have been discussed at some length in the Press, particularly on occasions such as the conclusion of the Franco-British agreement of December 1939, the Dutch-Belgian monetary pact of November 1943, and the Financial and Mutual Aid Agreement signed between the British Government and the French National Committee in February 1944. The negotiations undertaken by the Belgian and Dutch Governments in exile with the aim of arranging a customs union between the two countries has been hailed as a step in the direction of western European economic integration, and some prominence was given in the North African Press to General de Gaulle's references, in a speech of March 18th, 1944, to "... une sorte de groupement occidental réalisé avec nous principalement sur une base économique" and to the advantages which would follow from its organization as "un centre capital dans une organisation mondiale de la production des échanges et de la sécurité." The area to be included in addition to Britain and France in the regional arrangements is generally not specified: the most usual proposal seems to be that for a "northern" group which would include if possible the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, Denmark and the Scandinavian countries, together with the overseas territories of the four imperial Powers. It might be possible also to include the British Dominions—with the exception of Canada whose increasingly close economic ties with the United States might make her membership less likely. On the other hand it seems that General de Gaulle may have had in mind a grouping of the more southerly states of western Europe, and commentators in the North African Press suggested a *bloc* of which Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Holland, and Belgium should form the inner core, and which might, while excluding the Scandinavian countries, include Switzerland and even Italy.

Some idea of the economic integration already existing between the members of the more typical example—the northerly

group listed above—may be obtained from the following figures:

For the group as a whole intra-regional trade accounted in 1937 for 56 per cent of total imports and 59 per cent of total exports, while in the case of no country did the proportion for either imports or exports fall below 40 per cent. It has been suggested that this 50-60 per cent self-sufficiency could be increased to 75 per cent without undue strain in the use of resources, but certain materials—notably cotton and wheat—must be obtained from outside in considerable quantities.

Apart from arrangements for general consultation and collaboration on economic affairs, which it is hoped will in any case extend over the whole international field, the measure which must be applied in concert by the members of an economic regional group seeking to follow expanding trade and employment policies fall under the following headings:

1. Commercial policy.
2. Monetary policy.
3. The co-ordination of full employment policies.
4. International investment.

The history of international trade in the nineteen thirties shows conclusively the havoc which can be caused when a number of countries fear a deficit on their international account and apply wholesale and somewhat haphazard trade restrictions by means of quotas, tariffs, bilateral agreements, and currency devices. The same restrictionist influences will be present, it may be in even greater strength, after the present war, and there is a strong *prima facie* case for any regional arrangement which can lessen pressure on the balance of payments of potential deficit countries and provide a sector within which an expansionist policy could be freely pursued. The principle of expanding mutual, compensatory trade between the members of a group is similar in some respects to that behind bilateral purchase of payment agreements, but the disadvantages of the latter are diminished in proportion to the extension of the area of exchange. Several types of commercial agreements might be used to secure the expansion of trade within the region, including ta-

riff and quota concessions and long-term purchasing agreements, but it must be made quite clear that it is this expansion and not the erection of barriers to trade with the outside world which is intended. It must be admitted, however, that preferential arrangements of this kind may be opposed by those who regard the unconditional Most Favoured Nation clauses in commercial treaties as prime agents in the promotion of international trade. French opinion has not in the past been wholeheartedly in favour of the Most Favoured Nation clause and attempts were made in the nineteen thirties to replace it with agreements designed to allow greater freedom in commercial negotiations. Great Britain on the other hand opposed any abrogation of Most Favoured Nation obligations, and it was largely on this account that the Ouchy Convention of 1932, aiming at the promotion of tariff reduction between the signatories (Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg) was never put into effect. It is possible that the United States would put up a determined defence of the Most Favoured Nation clause and "non-discrimination" in general, but it is generally agreed that the principle is by no means easily applicable and was in practice evaded on occasions even by nations professing allegiance. Moreover exceptions were recognized, e.g. in the case of preferential agreements within the British Commonwealth, and there seems no reason why the setting up of a western European group should lead to the wholesale abandonment of Most Favoured Nation obligations. In so far as tariff reductions are made which would be possible on a regional basis but not if the concessions must be generalized an increase in total world trade is likely to result, and the same is true of purchasing agreements negotiated between members who would otherwise have cut down on these or other imports owing to the difficulty of placing exports in sufficient quantities to provide for the debts incurred.

Certain monetary agreements would almost certainly follow the establishment of a regional economic group; it would be natural for instance to ensure the short-term stability of the various exchange rates, and to overcome temporary disequilibria by mutual credit arrangements, and the Belgium-Dutch mone-



tary pact has been suggested as one whose principles might be extended to such a region. An extension of the financial agreement concluded between Britain and the French Committee in February 1944 has also been advocated. Sir John Anderson, replying to a question in the House of Commons, said, "we shall, of course, hope to build further on this war-time foundation," but this is an issue on which the outcome of general international discussions must be awaited. The crux of the matter may be the free convertibility of the currency of one country or of the monetary organization of the group—a point on which the Belgian-Dutch agreement lays down the condition of the approval of the debtor country. It is likely that there would be stiff opposition from the United States to monetary arrangements involving the widespread use of blocked currency payments to ensure the desired import/export structure and the adjective "Shachtian" would probably be employed in its usual abusive sense. It should be possible, however, to reserve monetary discrimination for the eventualities in which it would, whatever the organization of international finance, almost inevitably be employed. It should be made clear that there is no intention to use currency restrictions or manipulations against the exports of the United States or any other country, except in so far as their willingness to accept imports was so far deficient that such methods became necessary. The group should provide for such an eventuality by securing that there would be, so to speak, a truce between its members—an agreement providing that the latter should not seek to foist on each other an unwelcome "adverse" balance for which an outside country was responsible. Such an agreement is by no means hostile in intention, and might cause very much less international friction than autarkic measures taken *ad hoc* at a time when international economic relations were strained, as well as providing an alternative to the complete abandonment of the principle of the international division of labour.

An agreement between members of the group to take effective steps to raise and maintain the level of employment in their home countries would be an important factor in international

trading relationships. Great stress is laid nowadays on the influence which the level of activity in one country may exert on the economy of another—both through the multiplier effect of a change in their export/import relations and by the direct impact of a change in the demand for exports on particular industries dependent on this market. The assurance of a reasonably stable demand through even a part of the export sector would reduce the caution with which possible deficit countries will otherwise be inclined to move in commercial matters, and the elimination of sudden changes in the balance of trade would greatly facilitate the task of those concerned with the stabilization of employment at home. Such an agreement will be the easier to conclude in so far as there is likely to be a similarity of outlook on economic and social problems between the Governments concerned.

Arrangements for joint investment both inside and outside of the region might be dovetailed with measures for securing that the balance of international payments is achieved on expansionary rather than restrictionist lines. It is likely that the supply or guarantee of loans to areas needing development could also usefully be carried out by a regional investment organization. In the transition period none of the countries included will have large amounts of capital available for long-term development projects outside the group, but the "mature economy" countries of western Europe will be just those which in the long run should be able to undertake such projects, to their advantage as well as that of the backward areas. International investment will in any case have been facilitated by the solution of balance of payments difficulties by economic organization within the group.

It would be rash to suggest that any conclusion could be reached on the subject until the attitude of other countries both inside and outside the prospective group could have been ascertained, and detailed statistical work carried out on the subject, e.g. of the structure of pre-war trade and probable post-war capacities. But this is the subject which, above all others, lies at the heart of Anglo-French economic relations. Those

who assume that there is an alternative solution in a relatively uncontrolled international economic system should consider the prospects carefully before rejecting the proposals out of hand, and whatever the advantages or disadvantages of the scheme there is little to be said for ignoring it or for failing to undertake the preliminary investigations without which it could not in case of need be put into effect.

## Chapter VII

### THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS

The cultural relations between England and France have their roots deep in the past. They are based on the factors common to Western civilization. The Roman Empire set its mark on both countries. The Latin language underlies their culture. Since the Renaissance the two countries have influenced one another, even during periods when they were at war. Though in the modern age English influence has been stronger upon French political ideas, and, from the beginning, French influence stronger upon English cultural life, it would be as wrong to ignore the influence of the French Revolution in England as that of Shakespeare in France, particularly since the Romantic revival. This mutual influence has not been exercised deliberately by the inclusion of the language and literature of the one country in the school syllabuses of the other; it has resulted from a common culture maintained in France by the *lycée* and in Britain by the "public," grammar, and secondary schools, often without any realization that it was common to the two countries. In many important respects English differs from French education and these differences tend to obscure the essential similarity of the sources of British and French culture. Thus the French attach far more importance than we do to establishing definite standards of academic attainment. French education is more purposeful and systematic than British. It sets out to cover a large area systematically and in detail and the want of facts and accomplishments which are acquired in England by accident if at all, is in France matter for reproach. A Frenchman who has taken his *baccalauréat* has a fair background of historical knowledge about Europe and some grasp of the essentials of historical interpretation, but an Englishman who has matriculated need know nothing about continental Europe nor have taken his conception of the historical process much beyond the comfortable assumption

tion that things tend to get better. English education, even now that it is controlled by a Ministry, is still highly unorganized, a state of things which results in many notable omissions but which gives scope for spontaneous development and removes the danger of uniformity. Nevertheless, Britain will have to take more seriously the task of producing good and well-informed "Europeans" if the full possibilities of Anglo-French co-operation are to be realized.

In a sense, the cultural relations between the two countries were never on a better and more promising footing than in 1939. French cultural prestige stood very high, not only in literature, but in painting, music, and the cinema. The rise of the Nazis in Germany had disillusioned many of the older admirers of German civilization, and the richness and variety of French civilization acquired a new importance when seen against the background of German neo-barbarism. The course of the war, although it has not been without deleterious effects, has done very little to alter this state of affairs. Indeed, two war developments, the establishment here of a French Press and the great importance of the French service of the B.B.C., have aided the knowledge of French and increased interest in French affairs.

The scholastic position of French is very strong. It is overwhelmingly the first modern language studied in British schools. Its only—and feeble—modern competitor is German. Even Latin is losing ground to French as Greek has already done. The other modern competitors, Spanish, Italian, Russian, are very weak indeed. As long as the reasons for teaching any foreign language are principally cultural, the position of French will continue to be strong. Should the argument for teaching foreign languages be based chiefly on grounds of utility, French would undoubtedly suffer, but so would linguistic study as a whole, since to an increasing extent English is the language which, for professional or commercial purposes, it is most useful to know.

Short of an educational revolution, French seems likely to retain its primacy. There are two reasons (apart from use and wont) why this is a matter for rejoicing. The first is that the teaching of French has immensely improved in the last twenty

years. The rise of the modern language schools in the universities, the improved status of language teaching, the increasing insistence on competence in language teaching, have resulted in the raising of French in schools to a plane equal to that of classics or science or mathematics. It is no longer a soft option taught by amateurs. No other language has anything like the same number of competent teachers to serve it, and it would take another twenty years to breed a generation of teachers of Russian or German or Spanish equal to the teachers of French in mastery of their subject and pedagogic experience.

The second reason for rejoicing in the predominance of French is closely connected with the first. French well taught and quite well learned is the second language of practically every member of the increasingly numerous educated class. This makes for a valuable cultural unity within the State; neither Germany nor France have this asset since they have not the same predominance of one foreign language in their educational system or cultural life. This, of course, would not be so valuable an asset if the culture to which French is a key were not in itself rich and varied, full of sustenance old and new, but in any case it is clearly desirable that, failing Latin, the educated classes in Britain should have a second language which could in some sense take its place, and French is clearly the one language that can do so. In addition to this, French is the language most widely known in those continental countries where English is least known, and it thus provides a valuable cultural link with countries with which we should otherwise lack the means of cultural contact.

It is not to be expected that French should take proportionally so large a place in the universities as in the schools. Boys and girls who have distinguished themselves in French at school do not always read Modern Languages at the universities, particularly the older English universities, where the prestige of the old subjects is still great. More scholarships in Modern Languages and more funds for the Modern Language Faculties would, to some extent, redress the balance. At present, the main need is better provision for French studies.

The French side of the picture is not quite so satisfactory. The teaching of English in the *lycées* and universities is of very high quality and some very valuable academic work has been done in the field of English literature, but English has not the monopolistic position in French education that French has in English education. German is, or was, a real rival. There are fewer translations and no equivalent at all for the very large English market for French books. The success of the monthly review, *La France Libre*, and the London market for French films are phenomena with no French counterpart. English has not the commanding position in French schools and universities that French has in English education. It is not safe to assume that the average educated Frenchman has a reading knowledge of English as the average educated Englishman has of French. The completeness and self-sufficiency of French culture and the consequent fact that the French do not feel compelled to look abroad to supplement their own literary heritage explains in some degree the comparative neglect of English authors by the majority of educated Frenchmen. When the educated classes in France do look abroad, however, they do not necessarily look at England, and even the English-reading public tends increasingly to concentrate on American literature. It is in politics and history that British prestige is highest. Britain is regarded as the successful type of democracy and, from Montesquieu onwards, French political theory, and even constitutional practice, has owed much to British inspiration. Since 1940 admiration for the political institutions of this country have increased and become more widely diffused. The study of those institutions is, however, largely segregated from the study of English language and literature, and it is not generally through the medium of British scholarship that it is conducted. Mutual understanding would profit by a closer integration in both countries of literary and historical studies. By this means each nation could achieve a deeper comprehension and a more coherent picture of the life of the other.

Thus the position may be summed up somewhat as follows: In each country the other's language is taught well and, in

Britain, the number of people acquiring a reading knowledge of French in the process is very large. In France, not only is there competition from German, but fewer boys and girls get any serious language teaching at all. In neither country has the teaching of the languages been adequately supplemented by study of the life and culture of the other country. But the main problem of cultural relations will remain. How is mutual understanding to be fostered? First of all, culture must be understood more widely than it commonly is. English culture is deeply political.

A Frenchman who may not be at all interested in our literary or artistic culture may be much interested in our social structure. He may also be very ignorant of it. A great deal of harm was done in France between the two wars by ignorance of the British system of social insurance, for example. If the work of the existing British Institute in Paris is to be extended, it should not be confined to improving knowledge of the English language and other "cultural" activities. It should be a centre of information about the working of British institutions of all kinds. The function of the British Council should be interpreted more widely; the "British way and purpose" should be illustrated by trade unions, the London County Council, the various religious organizations as well as, or more than by the standard academic institutions. The recent publication by the British Council of books on trades unionism and co-operation indicates a move in this direction which it may be hoped will be continued.

But the academic institutions have an important part to play. It should be noted that whereas the linguistic standards have risen in both countries, whereas the teachers of the two languages in France and Britain have, to an increasing degree, had first-hand knowledge of France and Britain, general academic contacts were probably less important in 1939 than in 1914. At no time did any serious number of French students, other than students of English, come to England to do advanced academic work. On the other hand, it was not at all uncommon for English students to study in France. Apart from art students in Paris, the Paris medical school used to draw on the English-



speaking world and some of the Paris special schools, notably the *École des Chartes*, were Meccas for post-graduate workers. This had largely ceased to be true by 1939. Between the two wars, British post-graduate teaching had greatly improved. The historians who had gone to the *École des Chartes* now tended to go to the Institute for Historical Research in London or to go to the great American universities. In some fields of study, for example economics, French teaching and research resources were simply inadequate; a good student of economics would have been better advised to go to Sweden or Italy or the United States than to France. Something of the same kind was true of the physical sciences where great capital equipment was now required. If British post-graduate students are to be encouraged to go to France, it should be recognized that, in some fields of study, the best students will prefer to go to America or to stay in England. This will remain true until the academic resources of Paris are restored to their old relative level. But in some fields—modern history, geography, some parts of sociology, comparative law, philology—French resources are adequate. We should aim at making Paris, Lyons, and Strasbourg as natural centres for British students as they were for American students up to 1939.

It is equally important to encourage the French universities to send good students here. To supply the deficiencies of the French educational system, Cambridge in the physical and mechanical sciences, Oxford in medicine and chemistry, and London in some fields of study may present a useful opportunity to French students. The lack of any fund similar to the Rhodes Fund, which is not open to French students, which would give facilities to students from France and from other Allied countries, is a serious handicap to the strengthening of Britain's cultural prestige. The great common interest that we have in colonial problems might lead to an exchange of the teaching resources of Britain and France in relevant fields. But the exchange of good students is even more important. The trade unions might encourage French trade union officials or members to come to Ruskin College; the churches might exchange theo-

logical students; the aim should be in every case to make personal exchanges of specialists of all kinds easy. One way to do so is to provide funds. The need for funds in Britain is probably greater than in France, since the visit of a French student will probably continue to involve for him a higher proportionate expenditure than a similar visit by a British student to France. But this is a matter to be pressed on Governments and private foundations. Another is to remove difficulties. The French Government, for instance, might make it less risky for a French member of the *Université* to take a job in England by allowing that service to count for seniority. The British educational authorities might, in the same way, allow service in a French school or higher institution to count for pension rights.

One weakness of the French university system was the comparative poverty of the university libraries. If the Government is to subsidize the export of British culture it might usefully consider subsidizing the export of British academic books which are, by French standards, remarkably dear. British libraries are better off for French books, but again, university libraries tended to concentrate on literature in their purchases of French books. The study of British and French cultures in all their aspects was made harder than it need have been by the limitations of library resources, apart from Paris on one side and Oxford, Cambridge, and London on the other. In making provision for the supply of British books to French universities the needs of the provincial universities, and particularly such of them as have suffered like Caen from the war, should be kept in mind.

Another aspect of the problem of cultural co-operation between Britain and France deserves earnest consideration. In journalism, the activities of the two countries are in a high degree complementary. France has many monthly reviews of high quality while, in this respect, Britain is much less well provided. Our speciality is weeklies, in which France is largely deficient. French monthlies are, however, seldom read in this country and few British weeklies reach France. If English public libraries were to take in the principal French monthly periodicals and if

efforts were to be made to encourage the same in France of British weeklies, a fruitful source of information about the current cultural and political activities of the two nations would be opened up.

To sum up: The importance of cultural relations is twofold. A mutual understanding of the strictly "cultural" achievements of the two countries can be a very effective link. There is more to be done on the French than on the British side, but there is a good deal to be done on both. But in addition, an understanding of the character of the civilization of each country by the educated classes of the other can prevent friction, alienation, and misunderstanding. A great deal of the difficulties that helped to separate British and French public opinion between the two wars arose from simple ignorance of what, in a given context, Frenchmen or Englishmen were talking about. The linguistic identity of the political vocabulary in the two languages concealed the divergencies of meaning due to a different history and different social structure. But mutual understanding of the problems, the national psychology, the institutional framework of the two countries is an essential preliminary condition of any collaboration between them that is based on public opinion. And no other collaboration is likely to be fruitful for more than a few years.

## *Chapter VIII*

### *CONCLUSIONS*

The question which this Report has set out to answer is how Anglo-French co-operation fits into the general framework of British policy as it may be inferred from pronouncements made and undertakings given by the British Government. It has been recognized that to some Frenchmen and some Englishmen co-operation between the two countries seems intrinsically desirable, but it has been felt that these groups do not carry sufficient weight to make it possible to base co-operation solely, or even chiefly, on their predilections, and that at any rate in the first instance the Anglo-French Entente must rest on foundations of interest as well as sentiment.

Britain is pledged to assist in the constitution and maintenance of a system of international security the outlines of which were sketched at Dumbarton Oaks. This system, far from excluding particular arrangements between individual Powers, clearly asserts the need for such arrangements and makes provision for a considerable measure of "regionalism." Britain has already begun to make such arrangements with other Powers, designed not only to ensure her own security but to enable her to contribute as effectively as possible to the security of Europe and the world.

Chief among these special commitments is the Anglo-Soviet Alliance. This Treaty has the express purpose of preventing future German aggression in Europe and is based on the assumption that this end can only be attained if an aggressive Germany is permanently confronted with the prospect of a war on two fronts. The strengthening of this safeguard by the creation of a system of alliances in eastern Europe concerns Russia primarily; a similar association in the west is among the chief aims of British policy.

Britain must take the initiative in establishing the western sector of security. To do this, she must in the first place be sure of

a permanent and secure base for intervention in the Continent.

It would be impossible, for strategic reasons, for British military intervention in the Continent to be based entirely on Norway or the Low Countries. A neutral France could hamper British action, perhaps fatally; a hostile France would constitute a direct threat to the safety of these islands as well as a formidable obstacle to British action in the Continent. In the event, for example, of Russia being attacked by a resurgent Germany, Britain could not, without at least the passive assistance of France, take the action to which she is pledged in support of Russia. If France is out of the European security system the traditional aim of German foreign policy, namely, to separate the eastern and the western Allies, is realized and the two sectors of the European security system can be demolished in turn. For this reason co-operation with France is for Britain an indispensable condition of the discharge of her obligations to Europe and a necessary complement to the Anglo-Soviet Alliance.

The success of Anglo-Russian co-operation depends also on the freedom of the Mediterranean, the shortest route of communication by sea with Russia as well as with our Balkan Allies. France commands the western approaches of the Mediterranean and without her active co-operation the security of this vital supply line cannot be assured.

These arguments would still apply even if France failed to recover her former military strength, and even if she was, in consequence, unable to make any considerable contribution in man-power and industrial power to the maintenance of security. On this point dogmatism is as yet premature but all the indications are that France will recover sufficiently to be, by virtue of her military and economic strength alone, an important asset to any European alliance.

To France, the advantages of co-operation with Britain are equally great. Theoretically three policies are open to her. She may try to achieve an isolation which she lacks the power to sustain and which must end in ruin. She may, on the other hand, try to achieve security by absorption in a purely continental system from which Britain would be excluded. No amount of

Allies in eastern Europe can compensate, however, for the lack of an assured guarantee of direct and immediate military assistance in the event of an attack from beyond the Rhine, such as Britain alone can provide. By close alliance with Britain and Russia France can help to construct that strong bulwark of security in eastern Europe without which it will be impossible to prevent the revival of German power, and at the same time assure herself of adequate military support in the west. This policy, which is fully in line with her tradition, is at present favoured by the overwhelming majority of Frenchmen and is the declared policy of the French Provisional Government. It has been confirmed in the Franco-Soviet Alliance of December 1944 (cf. Postscript). The next step is expected to be the conclusion of a similar treaty between France and Britain, followed perhaps by the formal association of the two instruments.

In the long run, however, other factors than reason play their part in deciding policy. On the day of Allied victory Germany will be prostrate and the need for restraining German power will not therefore be conspicuously evident. This will obscure the need for constant vigilance and preparation and will temporarily remove the factor which has done most to unify French and British policies. Old suspicions will re-assert themselves and certain necessary conditions will have to be satisfied on both sides if co-operation is to be preserved.

French opinion must, in particular, be satisfied on three fundamental issues: (a) That Britain will abstain absolutely from any attempt to intervene in the development of French internal affairs. This negative condition has been assured by the recognition of the French Provisional Government once the British Government was satisfied that it corresponded to the wishes of the French people. (b) That France's claim to equality with the other Great Powers will be recognized. That this condition will be satisfied does not now permit of doubt, but it must still be one of the principal objects of British policy to ensure that it shall be completely fulfilled at the earliest opportunity. (c) That Britain will bear the full burden of her responsibilities as a European Power and in particular contribute a share of man-

power, equal to that provided by other countries of comparable resources, to the organization for security. On this point Great Britain must be able to convince her continental Allies that her special relations with the Dominions and the United States of America will not involve the neglect of her European commitments.

On the British side there are also expectations which must be realized if British opinion, still not conspicuously eager for cordial relations with France, is to give to the Entente that constant support which is necessary to sustain it. It is legitimate for Britain to expect from France a more sympathetic understanding than she has hitherto shown of the special characteristics of British policy which result from our position as an oceanic Power and as the centre of the Commonwealth. France must recognize that we can never develop that exclusive concentration on the affairs of the continent which in the past has been a distinguishing mark of French policy. The apparent instability of French policy, which resulted from the weakness of the French Executive under the Third Republic, has also been an obstacle to Anglo-French co-operation in the past, and such a strengthening of the Executive as important sections of French opinion now favour would be a considerable contribution to Anglo-French understanding, in so far as it imparted a greater and more manifest consistency to French policy. Finally, if Britain has in the past provided less than her fair share of man-power in the discharge of the joint responsibilities of the two countries, French industrial weakness has placed an undue charge on British industrial resources, and the expansion of French industry which is the declared policy of the Provisional Government cannot fail to be welcome to British opinion.

When these conditions are satisfied British and French policy must find some general unifying purpose if co-operation is to be securely established. Their joint function in the leadership of western Europe and in policing the Mediterranean is their special and principal contribution to European security. In addition to this they must share with their eastern Allies the responsibility for preventing the revival of aggressive military power in Germany.

Anglo-French agreement on this last point is of paramount importance and the signs are that it will be more easily achieved than in the past. The essential problem is to reconcile the economic prosperity of Germany, which British opinion has tended to regard as a condition of the prosperity of Europe, with military security from German aggression, which is the chief pre-occupation of French policy. It has been seen that in proportion to the willingness of Britain to assume definite commitments in Europe the French desire for *revanche* declines. Such apparant conflict of interest and policy may in any case be much less evident now that German power has been more effectively crippled by Anglo-Saxon bombing than ever it was by French action.

France and Britain have the general obligation to represent, within the councils of the Great Powers, the interests and traditions of Europe. To-day the centre of political gravity is moving steadily away from the old world, and the new distribution of power creates the danger that Europe may have less than her just share in determining the final Peace Settlement. Great Britain and France, as the principal representatives of Europe on the Security Council proposed at Dumbarton Oaks, must regard themselves as in a special sense the guardians of the European heritage.

#### ECONOMICS

Certain transitional economic problems will demand collaboration, and in many cases direct negotiations, between Britain and France, but the question of trading relations over a long period can be considered only in the light of international economic organization and the commercial policies of other countries. Anglo-French trade, while of reasonable importance, does not play an outstanding part in the economy of either country, but at the same time one important issue—the possibility of regional economic arrangements among the countries of western Europe—may be decisively influenced by the willingness of Britain and France to work together in this direction. Within such a group there would be opportunities for an expansion of



trade and a co-ordination of employment and investment programmes, designed not in any spirit of aggression against outside countries but to meet the difficult post-war situation facing members of the group, and Britain and France should explore the possibility of directing their economic collaboration along these lines even while aiming at a fully comprehensive international solution.

### CULTURE

These political and strategic bonds must be fortified by a much greater mutual understanding between the two peoples than has so far existed. In this respect, more has to be done on the French than on the British side, but a more purposeful view of education in Britain, and in particular a greater emphasis on the study of European history, would not only assist Anglo-French understanding but would do much to prepare British opinion for the role which Britain must assume in post-war Europe.

Our relations with France are the key to our relations with Europe, and the future of the Entente depends more than upon any other factor on the degree to which, as a nation, we become conscious of Europe. In 1940 Great Britain became, largely in spite of herself, the guardian and leader of Europe. She received the trust and admiration of a continent which had latterly alternated in its appeal to the leadership of the two western partners, but which now looked to her alone. Though past history does not show an adequate desire for co-operation between those partners, it is to be hoped that they will draw the necessary conclusions from the disasters which have followed upon one another since 1940 and that they will finally establish that co-operation and joint leadership upon which both the future of Europe and their own survival depend.

## POSTSCRIPT

The conclusion by the French Provisional Government of a twenty years' pact of alliance with the Soviet Union announced in December 1944 affords further important evidence of the course which French foreign policy is likely to follow after the war. Essentially, the pact is to be regarded as a complement to the Anglo-Soviet Alliance and as constituting with that Alliance the framework of European security. If, as is expected, it is supplemented by a similar agreement with Great Britain which will be aimed at giving formal expression to the close relations which already exist between this country and France, the first condition of European security, namely a firm association between the Powers to the east and those to the west of the Reich, will be established. It will be one of the principal objects of British policy to assist in the maintenance of such a system.

This said, however, there are various important differences between the Franco-Soviet and Anglo-Soviet Alliances which, though they must not be exaggerated, have to be borne in mind in any consideration of the future of Anglo-French relations. Whereas the Anglo-Soviet Alliance clearly specified that it might be superseded, by common agreement between the two countries, in the event of any general system of security being established, the Franco-Soviet Alliance makes no such provision. This is in part due to the fact that the latter instrument was drawn up after the publication of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals which encouraged the conclusion of agreements for common assistance between particular Powers on the grounds that such agreements had a necessary part in the wider arrangements for security. The San Francisco Conference has yet to determine, however, whether a particular agreement like the Anglo-Soviet or Franco-Soviet Alliance can come into operation without the formal sanction of the Council of the new security organization. It seems probable at the moment of writing that France and Russia may claim that their agreement exists independently of the general security system and can be

brought into force without the sanction of the Council. It is possible that this view will not be shared by Britain and the United States. If such disagreement should arise it would indicate the persistence of the old divergence between British and French views of security deriving from the tendency of France to seek security in narrowly defined engagements with particular European Powers and the preference of Britain for a more comprehensive and less well defined system. Reference has been made in the foregoing pages to the differences which arose from this conflict of views in the past and to the importance of seeking some compromise which will eliminate it in the future.

Another difference between the Anglo-Soviet and Franco-Soviet Agreements also deserves emphasis. The latter contains no provision for the acceptance by both parties of the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other States, nor does it contain, as the Anglo-Soviet Agreement does, any repudiation of the desire for territorial aggrandisement. This difference might become important in the future settlement with Germany. Since, however, the British Government has already asserted the principle that territory may be taken from the former Axis countries if this can be shown to be necessary for reasons of security and since this principle has already been applied in the plans drawn up at Yalta for the future boundaries of Poland, this particular discrepancy is unlikely to become a serious source of disagreement. Whether it does or not will depend mainly on the success of the United Nations in maintaining a common policy towards Germany. In the same connection, it is to be observed that whereas the Anglo-Soviet Alliance pledges the two countries to assist each other only in the event of an act of aggression committed by Germany or her former satellites against either of them, France and Russia are committed to assist each other in any war which may arise over measures designed to "bar the way to any kind of initiative rendering possible a new German attempt at aggression."

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the precise importance to be given to these differences depends entirely on the success with which the Allies maintain a common policy to-

wards Germany. It is equally true, however, that they are significant of certain differences of emphasis between British and French conceptions of security. France, as a continental Power, is still likely to attach more importance than Britain does to precise guarantees against future German aggression, and, in some respects, her policy towards Germany may have closer affinities with Russian than with British policy. An extreme exaggeration of this tendency in French policy would be an attempt to construct an exclusively continental system of security in which an oceanic Power like Britain would not find a place. There is no reason to suppose that such a policy to-day would commend itself to French opinion, and it certainly does not coincide with the pronouncements of the French Government. The consequences which would result from the adoption of such a policy by France have already been indicated in Chapter III of the Report, and the only purpose of this note is to emphasize a danger which, however slight it may be at present, must continue until an Anglo-French Entente receives definite expression in the form of a military alliance.